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'Israel wants to get rid of Arab League'

BEIRUT (R) — The head of the Arab League was quoted on Friday as saying Israel was trying to do away with the 22-member league and become "sole master" of the Middle East. League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul-Meguid also told the Beirut daily Al Safir during a three-day visit to Lebanon that the organisation was so short of funds that it lacked the money to pay next month's colories. "Israel is working hard to eliminate the Amal Assart salaries. "Israel is working hard to eliminate the Arab League and replace it with a Middle East league... she will not accept that Arabs gather without her any more," Dr. Abdul Meguid said. "She is a major party in the region now and wants to strip the Arab League of its Arab identity," he added. "This is the origin of its war on the Arab League, because it wants to be the centre of a new war of the Arab League, because it wants to be the centre of a new institution with an unclear identity so that the impression will be that Israel is the Middle East. "Israel is trying to change the identity of the region and impose itself as the sole master because it always feels that it is a foreign body in the region." Asked if the Arab League had the money to pay its salaries for next month, he replied: "No, the league survives on a month-to-month basis."



Geagea case witness alleges torture

BEIRUT (AFP) - The main witness in a trial of former warlord Samir Geagea dramatically changed his evidence on Friday saying he had been tortured to confess to taking part in the bombing of a church which killed 11 people. Gerges Khoury told the court that "the army intelligence services wrung the confession out of me under torture. They beat me until blood ran from my mouth and my feet. They stopped me lying down for 43 days." He had told police initially that he and four members of the former Christian militia group the Lebanese Forces (LF) headed by Mr. Geagea had taken part in the attack in February 1994. He said they had also been working for the Israeli secret services. Mr. Khoury also denied knowing where the LF headquarters were, where he had alleged that the attack was planned. "I was taken there during the military investigation." He further denied knowing Mr. Geagea and his right-hand man Fuad Malek, who are the main defendants in the trial. The hearing was adjourned until Monday following Mr. Khoury's statement at the request of the prosecutor general in order to prepare a new line of questioning.

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Arafat rejects 'Jenin first' proposal

PLO might accept time- tabled withdrawal from W. Bank

(Agencies) - Palestine leader Yasser Arafat on Friday rejected an Israeli proposal that as a step towards expanding Palestinian self-rule he start running the West Bank town of Jenin while Israeli troops remain there. However, a senior Palesti-

nian negotiator said the Palestine Liberation Organistion (PLO) was ready to compromise and accept a gradual Israeli troop withdrawal from West Bank towns, signalling an end to the months-long impasse in the Israel-PLO autonomy talks. Also Friday, the militant

group Hamas threatened reprisals against Palestinian security forces if more Hamas supporters were arrested in the Gaza Strip (see page 12).
"He (Israeli Prime Minis-

ter Yitzhak Rabin) says to me 'come and take the municipality of Jenin'," Mr. Arafat told a congregation in a Gaza mosque in his first public reaction to the latest Israeli "I say 'do you think I am a

mukhtar (village headman)?' I said to him 'no' Mr. Rabin said after talks with Mr. Arafat on Thursday

he had offered the PLO

today against two right-wing

candidates, according to an

opinion poll published Friday. Mr. Rabin garnered 41

per cent support against 33

per cent for his leading rival,

of the right-wing opposition Likud Party. Far-right

Tsomet Party chief Rafael

Eytan took 14 per cent in the

survey for the Yediot Ahar-

onot newspaper. Another 12

per cent voiced no opinion.

Recent polls had put Mr.

Netanyahu ahead but did not

include Eytan, a former milit-

ary chief of staff. Mr. Evtan

announced his intention to

run in the 1996 elections if

the right fails to unite behind

a single candidate. The

Dahaf institute questioned

508 Israelis on Wednesday

Israeli soldier wounded

MARJAYOUN (AP) - An

Israeli soldier was seriously

wounded Friday when he

stepped on a land mine

planted in an occupied bor-

der enclave in South Leba-

non, security sources said.

The sources said the soldier

was on foot patrol near the

village of Aishiyeh in the

Israel calls a "security zone"

Israelis themselves, the

authorius at 5:15 p.m. (1315 GMT). It could not be determined at 3 phone; whether the mine was at 3 phone; planted by guerrillas are in the mine.

changing sources said. Earlier Friday, in July 1 har Israeli helicopter gunships day. The strafed the bluffs of Abu Shaari Rashed overlockers.

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prehensit reasned overlooking east approved in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley with authorising machine gun fire, apparently authorising believing guerrillas were on level or the move in the same on the same of the move in the same on the same of the same

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dents promise Israel threatens to close

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180. There was no im-term mediate word on casualties.

and Thursday.

in mine blast

amin Netanyahu, leader

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM chairman control of municipal and economic affairs in Jenin, but Israeli troops would remain in the town.

The prime minister said Mr. Arafat had shown little enthusiasm for the proposal. The PLO leader is demanding a speedy Israeli troop redeployment in the West Bank before Palestinian elections, the stalled next stage of their 1993 peace deal.

Israel has demanded that Mr. Arafat prove he can prevent attacks against Israelis. and punish those behind them, as a condition for expanding his administration beyond the Gaza Strip and West Bank enclave of Jericho.

"I was controlling this municipality (Jenin) from Tunisia, from Egypt — from wherever because we are one people," Mr. Arafat said in the mosque.

"And I said to him 'no --we have agreed to implement the declaration of principles and it was supposed to start with redeployment (and) the elections last July'," Mr.

He described his Thursday meeting with Mr. Rabin at the Israel-Gaza border as difa question: Do you want to withdraw or not?. But he

(Rabin) did not reply." Israel announced on Thursday an easing of its closure of the Gaza Strip and West Bank, a first payback to Mr. Arafat for moving against militants.

'We agreed that starting next week we will allow 10,000 workers from Gaza to enter Israel and 5,000 from (the West Bank)," Mr. Rabin

The number represented only a quarter of the 60,000 Palestinians barred from their jobs since two suicide bombers killed 21 Israelis at a bus stop in central Israel on January 22.

Mr. Rabin, however, held out the prospect of progress towards holding Palestinian elections and moving Israeli troops out of towns in the West Bank.

Noting that the Palestinian self-rule authority had begun to act against the militants, Mr. Rabin told reporters peace talks would be "intensified," and he would meet the PLO leader again in four weeks time.

Palestinian security officials recently rounded up

"I wanted them to answer several dozen known militants and set up a military court to try them.

Mr. Arafat met Thursday evening and Friday morning with diplomats from the United States, Russia and Europe and asked them to exert pressure on Israel, said Arafat aide Marwan Kanafa-

Still, the Palestinians sent out fresh signals that they were ready to compromise. Senior negotiator Ahmad Qouriea, the economics minister, said Friday that the Palestinians would settle for a gradual, rather than a simultaneous troop puliout as long as it was accompanied by a

longer than three months. Mr. Arafat proposed to Mr. Rabin last week that troops pull out of one West Bank city as a test while the two sides negotiated the overall withdrawal plan, the Israeli daily Haaretz said Fri-

timetable and did not last

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who reportedly came up with "Jenin first," said Friday that while Mr. Arafat was not enthusiastic. "he didn't rule out what we

The Israelis apparently

no Jewish settlements near it. Media reports in recent weeks have said that an Israeli troop withdrawal would likely start in Jenin and Bethlehem, south of Jerusalem.

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres will meet in Paris this weekend at a symposium on the future of the Middle East.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, another key player in the Middle East peace process, will also be at the symposium which lasts from Saturday until Monday at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisa-

Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres will only have time for a prief meeting during the opening session of the conference and at a dinner given by French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur in the Louvre later on Saturday.

The PLO leader, due to arrive in Paris Saturday, is expected to hold talks with Mr. Balladur, Foreign Minister Mr. Alain Juppe and President Francois Mitter-

(Continued on page 71

FRIDAY PRAYERS: His Majesty King Hussein several other princes, Prime Minister Sharif attends Friday prayers held at Aisha Umm Al Zeid Ben Shaker, Speaker of the Upper House Moumineen mosque in the Abdoun area. of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi, the King's Attending the prayers with His Majesty were advisors, the Crown Prince's special advisor also His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, and senior civil and military officials (Petra)

Juppe warns Egypt against raising stakes in nuclear row

PARIS (Agencies) - French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe on Friday warned Egypt not to raise the stakes in its nuclear row with Israel prior to talks here between Israeli and Egyptian counterparts Shimon Peres and Amr

As both ministers prepared along with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to take part in a Paris symposium on the Middle East, Mr. Juppe advised Cairo nor to "raise the stakes" over the nuclear issue after Egypt made its

ditional on Israel's own. Mr. Juppe said France attached "great importance" to the extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and said he would tell Mr. Musa not to "raise the stakes so that the NPT can be

Mr. Juppe said after meet-

Mr. Musa told the press

non-nuclear engagement con-

ing with Mr. Musa they both shared "the same concern about the peace process which is in a difficult, if not critical

after his talks that Israel's Friday.

refusal to join the NPT would have "serious repercussions" in the region.

"In our view Israel will have to join the NPT," Mr. Musa told the press here after talks with Mr. Juppe, adding: "If they can move forward, it will be good for the region, if they don't it will very much adversely affect the regional

to avoid a crisis with Egypt over the non-proliferation

Mr. Peres said he was likely to meet with Mr. Musa late

osals concerning the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks which he had appreciated, Mr. Peres added but did not elaborate. "There are quite a few

Mr. Juppe had made prop-

problems but we are making progress," he added. Mr. Peres said talks on

Palestinian elections should be held as soon as possible. Several Arab countries, especially Syria, have long demanded Israel sign up to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which comes up for renewal in April.

Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin recently accused Egypt of pursuing an "anti-Israeli line" over the issue.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak accused Israel on Thursday of launching a new moves to settle differences over the Jewish state's nuclear programme.

(Continued on page 7)

King guest of honour Rabin to win elections against divided right at Denmark summit TEL AVIV (AFP) - Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would win general elections

By Erik Rasmussen Special to the Jordan Times

COPENHAGEN - His Majesty King Hussein will be the most prominent foreign visitor coming to Denmark during the U.N. World Summit for Social Development to be convened in the Copenhagen capital in

"This will be reflected at the summit's official state dinner at the royal palace by the seating of the Jordanian Monarch next to Her Majesty the Queen of Denmark who presides over the dinner with His Royal Highness Prince Consort Henri," confirms the royal protocol chief, Soeren

Mr. Haslund, who cooperates with the Lord Chamberlain's Office in arranging the royal dinner party, points to the fact that of the attending 128 heads of states King Hussein has been in the reign of power for the longest period and this, as well as the Jordanian constitutional status of a

monarchy, makes the seating arrangement to the left of Queen Margrethe II obvious. Also taken into consideration is the first planned official visit of the Danish royal house to Jordan which will take place Oct. 18 to 20.

Other outstanding Middle East participants in the U.N. summit will be Algerian President Liamine Zeronal, Emir Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah of Kirwait and Lebanese President Elias Hrawi. Also attending the summit will be Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. Vice-President Al Gore.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, President François Mitterrand of France, Chinese Premier Li Peng and his Japanese counterpart Tomiichi Murayama as well as South African President Nelson Mandela will also attend the summit in the Danish capital, which thus will host the largest concentration of world leaders

(Continued on page 7)

Russia, Chechens extend truce deadline

SLEPTSOVSK, Russia (Agencies) - Russian and Chechen military leaders agreed on Friday to extend until Sunday a ceasefire which had been due to expire at midnight, Chechen chief of

staff Aslan Maskhadov said. Speaking after four hours of talks in this settlement in the Ingushi region bordering Chechenya, Mr. Maskhadov said the two sides had failed to agree on an exchange of their dead and prisoners at noon (0900 GMT) on Satur-

Instead, they would simply exchange lists of prisoners in the Chechen capital Grozny on Saturday, he said.

Shamil Basayev, a renowned commander on the Chechen separatist side, told reporters: "Today was another day without fighting and without bloodshed. It is a

success." Contracting Mr. Basayev's remarks, Interfax news agency said in a report from Grozny that there had been an exchange of shell and tank fire south of the Chechen

capital overnight. Suggesting the talks had involved hard bargaining, Mr. Maskhadov told reporters: "Russia is pulling the blanket its way but we have chosen the right way. They are the aggressor. They just want to show the whole world

they are a humane country." comment from General Anatoly Kulikov, the head of the Russian delegation and commander of the Russian military operation in Chechenya. The Russian negotiators flew off from the

talks by helicopter. In Grozny, Russian forces captured the elder brother of Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported. Mr. Dudayev has already lost a son, who was killed in the fighting last month.

Mr. Maskhadov said meanwhile that political talks should replace the military

"Military men did not start this war. Politicians started it and only they can end it," he said. Field commanders could not bear the whole responsibility for the nineweek war, he said.

Ingush Deputy President Boris Agapov, who was hosting the talks, backed Mr. Maskhadov's appeal. "It's up to the politicians now," he Mr. Maskhadov criticised

Russian President Boris Yeltsin for refusing to meet with Mr. Dudayev face to face. We have our own government and president elected

(Continued on page 7)

Fahd to mediate row, but Doha is sceptical

RIYADH (AFP) - King Fand of Saudi Arabia is to resume his mediation on a border dispute between fellow Gulf Arab monarchies Bahrain and Qatar, an offi-

cial spokesman here announced on Friday But Qatar, which has its own border dispute with Saudi Arabia, expressed scenticism over the chances of success for Saudi mediation, which has already drag-

ged on for two decades. 'The Saudi monarch favours a resumption of mediation efforts between Bahrain and Qatar and is determined to make every effort needed to reach a settlement... preserving the rights of both parties," the

Saudi spokesman said. Saudi Arabia would contact both countries to restart its mediation.

In Doha, Qatari Crown Prince Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani said the dispute was "a complex affair, not as simple as the peoples of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) imagine."

"We have entrusted Saudi Arabia with the case for around 20 years, since well before the creation of the GCC," which groups all three countries with Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, he said.

ing on the means to settle this conflict within the framework of the International Court of Justice," the crown prince told the official Qatari News

"Now, we are concentrat-Agency (QNA). Bahrain on Thursday

offered to withdraw its request for a ruling from the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

pute with Qatar after Doha

Sheikh Hamad said Wednesday that his country could withdraw its request from the World Court to rule on the territorial dispute if a settlement could be reached through Saudi mediation. Earlier the same day, the

court said it was competent to rule on the dispute - 2 judgement described by Oatan representative Najib Al Nawimi as "a victory and a first step towards a peaceful settlement of the case." On Friday Bahrain wel-

resume mediation. Bahrain's crown prince, Sheikh Hamad Ben Isa Ai Khalifa, said: "The State of Bahrain affirms its full readiness for a constructive response to this gracious initia-

comed the Saudi offer to

Amid the scepticism over a Saudi role, Mr. Nawimi warned Friday that if Bahrain refused to accept a verdict from the World Court, which he said could take up to three years, Qatar would take the dispute to the U.N. Security Council.

"In case one of the two parties refuses to abide by a decision of the court, the other party has the right to take recourse to the Security Council to force it to abide.

Qatar claims the Hawar Islands, and wants demarcation of underwater archipelago boundaries, Zubarah. pearl-diving areas and fishing grounds and all matters conagreed to seek Saudi mediation to resolve its land discerning maritime boundaries.

Great demand for Fastlink Service starts in summer 1995

THE JORDAN Mobile Telephone Service (Fastlin) has been receiving increasing requests for reservation of mobile telephone lines. There is a great demand for this service because people have become aware of the efficiency of the new service which will enable subscribers to perform their duties effectively. In its serious endeavours to put the new service into operation, the company will do its best to switch on the new service in the summer of 1995, instead of the October deadline of 1995, set by the

poration. The new service costs a subscriber JD 100 as re-coverable insurance, JD 70

Telecommunications Cor-

as an operation fee payable one time, in addition to a monthly subscription of JD 21. Telephone call rates will range between 245 fils per minute during the day to 140 fils per minute at night. Rates of telephone calls made from one mobile telephone to another mobile telephone will range between 185 fils during daytime and 100 fils at night. Frequent users who will use this service frequently and continuously will get special discounts on both day and night rates.

In view of the high turnout and the great demand for this service, the Jordan Mobile Telephone Service has decided to expand the existing network.

He said that France 'understands perfectly well the various dimensions of this issue, which is about the Israeli nuclear programme." He added, however, that relations between Egypt

and Israel continue to be relations of peace and there's o going back on this."

Mr. Peres said after his talks with Mr. Juppe that the Israeli government was trying

"We are looking for solu-tions to the problem because Egypt spearheads the peace process in the Middle East."

campaign against Cairo as a smokescreen to block any

The two countries have engaged in a growing war of words over Israel's nuclear

Fastlink once connected always in touch

Jordan Mobile Telephone Services has started accepting applications for pre-registration for the cellular telephone service, fastlink.

LINES ARE LIMITED! To guarantee a cellular connection, fill out an application and pay a refundable deposit of JD 100 at any of the locations listed below.

To ensure your line, don't delay, apply today!

You may appty, pay your deposit, or pick up a brochure with detailed information, at any of the following locations:

Forte Grand Hotel JMTS Headquariers:

Tel: 863750 Fax: 863770

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United Insurance Company: Bisharat Tours Corporation:

Zarka Chamber of Commerce Volvo car dealer:

Located in Umm-Uthaina across from the San-Rock Hotel. Jabat Amman / inside Intercontinental Hotel

Shmeisani / Grindlays Bank Center

P.O.Box: 940821 Amman - 11194 Jordan

Deadline for applications: 20/2/1995



Jordan Mobile Telephone Services

British team off to Iraq seeking business chances

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN - A group of British businessmen headed for Baghdad on Friday, joining the stepped up flow of international traders into the Iraqi capital amid expectations that the U.N. sanctions imposed on that country are on their way to be eased if not lifted altogether.

The 20-member group, which arrived here Wednesday, is expected to spend about a week in Iraq, meeting government officials and private sector businessmen. Stephan Crouch of the

British Middle East Interests Group said the visit was mostly aimed at gathering "market intelligence" that would allow the businessmen to undate themselves about the situation in Iraq.

"There are many such groups visiting Iraq," Mr. Crouch told the Jordan Some members of the

group, whose visit has been cleared by the British government - one of the most ardent opponents of any easing or lifting of the sanctions against Iraq — were expected to return to Amman in four or five days while others might extend their visit to include areas beyond Bagh-

The identities of the businessmen have not been disclosed because of what Reuter described as possible adverse publicity in Britain. But they were from a 30member British business team which held talks in Amman on British-Jordanian trade and industrial opportu-

The team's visit to Iraq was announced in January after the British government allowed it to go ahead with it. Mr. Crouch said the British

Middle East Interests Group, which he represents, was not directly involved in the visit to Iraq although some of the visitors are linked to the

Three other-British businessmen are already in the Iraqi capital ahead of the group which left Friday.
"What British companies

are concerned about with Iraq is that they are losing touch with who really runs the country." Mr. Cronch was quoted as saying by Reuters.

want to keep in touch and appraise what future requirements might be," said Mr. Crouch, in an apparent refer-

STRASBOURG (R) - The

European Parliament on

Thursday threw further

doubt on European Union

(EU) plans for a lucrative

customs deal with Turkey,

saying Ankara's human rights

record was too poor for the

deal to be allowed to go

Europarliamentarians

adopted a resolution describ-

ing Turkey's rights record as

"too grave to allow for the

formation of the proposed

They said they would not

approve a deal granting Tur-

key access to EU markets

unless they heard reports of

progress in the human rights

Under the Maastricht trea-

ty, the parliament, the EU's

only directly elected body,

has the power to block deals

custom union at present."

through.

four-year-old sanctions against Iraq could be eased or lifted soon

Food and medicine are exempt from the sanctions. and, as such, some of the British businessmen who represent the sugar and pharmaceutical industry might sign deals during the visit.

Others in the group included representatives of water and agriculture sectors. Immediate prospects of

any international company securing huge contracts from Iraq even if the sanctions were to be lifted soon are Many market analysts be-

lieve that the Iraqi government would not have enough funds to launch any largescale reconstruction from oil revenues. Mandatory U.N. resolutions call for the appropriation by the U.N. of nearly 40 per cent of Iraq's income from oil exports — as and when allowed - to be channelled to a war reparations fund and to pay for U.N. costs of monitoring the ceasefire that ended the war over Kuwait in 1991.

"If the sanctions were to be eased or lifted tomorrow, it is unlikely that there would be massive business in nonessential items or mediumlevel consumer products," said a Jordanian trader who has had extensive experience in dealing with Iraq.

"There would be a significant amount of imports of foodstuffs into Iraq as the country would seek to rebuild its strategic reserves before going to other sectors of the market," said the businessman, who preferred to remain anonymous.

Mr. Crouch conceded as much. He told Reuter that initially at least Iraq would be a "spare-parts market."

French, German and Italian companies lead the inter-European competition for business with Iraq. Hundreds of businessmen from these countries visited Baghdad in

Many Third World countries, particularly those which sympathised with Iraq during the Gulf crisis, have also sent trade delegations to the country after the end of the war over Kuwait. Iraqi officials have repe-

atedly said that the Baghdad government would give preference in post-sanctions trade to countries which "The companies simply helped Iraq after the war by releasing Iraqi assets and helping Iraq secure essential items through deferred payence to expectations that the ment facilities.

next year.

UNHRC criticises Israel

GENEVA (AP) — The U.N. Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) decided Friday to end 28 years of scrutiny of violations in South Africa, but reiterated its annual criticism of Israel.

The 53-nation body unanimously agreed to drop South Africa from its future agenda, and thanked two special working groups for efforts to "eliminate apartheid in South Africa and to establish a nonracial and democratic socie-

"The commission has today closed an important chapter in its history," said Chief South African delegation Riaan Eksteen. "It is a chapter that neither South Africa nor the commission hopes to reopen.

The nation's first all-race elections were held last April, resulting in a majority for the African National Congress (ANC).

Condemnation of racial discrimination in South Africa occupied a large chunk of the commission's annual sixweek session ever since the

country was placed under special scrutiny in 1967. For years it shared the slot

of most criticised nation with Israel. Thanks to the developing country majority on the commission, many African and Arab nations with poor human rights records escaped attention.

That has slowly changed, with investigations into alleged abuses in countries like Iran, Iraq, Zaire and Sudan. However, the commission's agenda is still shaped as much by politics as by human rights concerns. China, for instance, has

managed to block any criticism of its abuses, and Russia is likely to escape this year with a mild rebuke for its bombings in Chechenya. On a packed day of voting. a resolution welcoming progress in the Middle East peace

hacking After almost 50 years of hostility, a peace of the brave is being crafted before our eyes," said U.S. delegate Stanley Plesent.

process received unanimous

started down the road to human dignity. That progress is reflected in this resolution,' he added. The United States, Russia and Norway put forward the motion.

A U.N. special investigator, former Swiss Foreign Minister Rene Felber, earlier this month said his mandate should end because progress in the peace process was more important than ritual condemnation of Israel which was ignored by the Tel Aviv government. However, other commis-

sion decisions were little changed from previous years. It voted by 27-1 in favour of a proposal by Arab countries demanding Israel stop violations and withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem. The United States voted against. There were 22 abstentions, including European nations

A resolution demanding Israeli withdrawal from the Syrian Golan Heights was passed by 25-1 with 23 ab-

Arab-American blames Israelis for mistreatment, Americans for apathy

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Samih Jaber left Chicago last week with plans to spend time with family in his native Jerusalem. Instead. he was jailed four days and intrrogated with a hood over his head and hands tied behind his back, he says.

The Israelis suspected Mr. Jaber and his cousin Mohammad Barakat, like him a long-, time Chicago resident and naturalised U.S. citizen, of carrying cash for the Muslim fundamentalist Islamic Jihad. They were arrested upon arrival in the country Feb. 9.

The group, opposed to peace talks and dedicated to Israel's destruction, has claimed the suicide bombing that killed 20 soldiers and a civilian in central Israel on Jan. 22.

In an interview with the Associated Press Thursday at his mother's Jerusalem home. Mr. Jaber. who was released Sunday without any charges pressed, saying the money he was carrying was meant to pay for a new addition to his mother's house. He said he was happy to be

leaving Israel and blamed U.S. officials for not doing enough to ease his plight. "It is the ambition of all Palestinians to come back and invest in their homeland after struggling (to make money) for so many years." said Mr. Jaber. "Unless.. we are safe to come to this country, there is no reason for us to come back." he added. A resident of Chicago for 26 years. Mr. Jaber owns a supermarket and is chairman of the American-Arab Chamber of Commerce there. His wife, children and two grandchildren also live in the city.

He and Mr. Barkat were detained at Ben Gurion airport near Tel Aviv upon arrival Feb. 9. carrying a total Mr. Jaber said he was car-

rying \$19,000 in cash and a check for \$69,475 from a U.S. real estate sale he just closed. Mr. Barakat, 36, who owns an ice-cream parlor in Chicago, had \$5,000 in cash and \$60,000 in a check. The Israelis detained them

for seven hours at the airport and "just kept asking about the money we had." Mr. laber said Then they handcuffed the

two men and took them to a prison in the southern coastal town of Ashkelon, where he was held for four days, and Mr. Barakat for seven. They are both now free without any charges pressed. Mr. Jaber complained U.S.

consular officials did not try to help win their release. "I put the blame on the American embassy most of all for not protecting Arab-Americans when they travel abroad," he said. "I was in jail for four days, my cousin for seven, and nobody con-

tacted me to ask what happend or why. This is bad." Liz Perez, a spokeswoman for the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem, said only that the consulate is aware of Mr. Jaber's case but would not comment on his allegations. "The first two days were a

nightmare," Mr. Jaber said, recalling his interrogation. He said a hood was placed over his head, and his hands were tied behind his back. handcuffed to a small, hard chair on which he sat, as loud music wailed in a cell a metre

The hood stunk. It stayed on my head all the time so that I could hardly breathe... had to call them many times iust to let some air into it because I have asthma.

square.

After two days, Mr. Jaber said he was transferred to another, slightly larger cell, where he remained until his

"I never had such a terrible experience," he said. Mr. Jaber, who maintains

he came with hopes of investing in Palestinian housing projects, now has lost faith in Israeli-Palestinian rapproachement.

"I am a peaceful man and I am against any terrorist acts from both sides. We were happy to see the peace process." he said. Now, "I am going back to the States as soon as I can. I don't want to stay here.

U.S. to pay Italian bank \$400m to settle Iraq claims

WASHINGTON (AP) The U.S. government has agreed to pay \$400 million to settle claims by a major Italian bank whose Atlanta branch funneled \$5.5 billion in loans to Iraq in the years before the Gulf war, the Justice Department announced Thursday.

The money will be paid to settle the Italian bank's claim for more than \$450 million resulting from Iraq's default on U.S. government-guaranteed loans with which Iraq bought a wide variety of American farm products.

Iraq defaulted on the loans in August 1990 after it invaded Kuwait. Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL), which is owned by the Italian government, and nine other banks that helped finance sales of U.S. farm commodities to Iraq filed claims for reimbursement under the Agriculture Department's export-credit guarantee prog-

Now that guarantee programme, known as the Commodity Credit Corporation, will pay BNL \$400 million.

Some Democratic lawmakers, led by Representative Henry B. Gonzalez of Texas, have alleged that Iraq used at least some of the money obtained under the CCC programme to develop its military and nuclear arsenals before it invaded Kuwait.

Payment of BNL's claim had been held up for several years by a criminal investigation of its Atlanta branch. which funnelled the \$5.5 billion in illegal loans to Iraq, the Justice Department noted in a statement The former manager of the

branch, Christopher Drogoul, pleaded guilty to wire fraud and submitting false reports to bank regulators and was sentenced in November 1993 to three years in prison. Several co-defendants also received prison terms.

Last month, a 11/2-year investigation by a federal prosecutor concluded that Bush administration officials did not illegally arm Iraq through the agricultural export programme and that BNL's top officials in Rome were not responsible for the fraud in Atlanta.

That conclusion cleared the way for the settlement to reimburse BNL.

"Now that the investigation of BNL is complete, the (CCC) is honouring its guarantees," the Justice Department statement said.

after murdering 30 people in

a Hebron mosque last Feb.

The grave is about five

kilometres from the centre of

Hebron, where Mr. Marzel

lives. He had to go through at

least three army posts to

reach the settlement.
"I went with some other

people who are also under house arrest," he boasted,

TEHRAN (AFP) - Iran values the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), but changes need to be made before it is adopted for an

indefinite period, Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said. Mr. Zarif, quoted by the official Iranian news agency

IRNA, said the treaty, which was adopted in 1970 and has 170 signatories, had "failed to preventing the prolifera-

Washington is urging sig-

Mr. Zarif, who is in charge of the ministry's legal and international affairs, argued that the "number of countries with access to nuclear weapons has increased after-

Furthermore, "the big powers have refused to transfer their nuclear technologies peaceful pursposes, despite the commitments made in the

for pressuring Russia to stop its nuclear cooperation with

lear energy plant at the southern port of Bushehr, on the Gulf, on which German engineers had been working before the 1979 Islamic revolution.

"We have abided by all the commitments to the NPT as. the international Atomic the signing of the treaty, with Energy Agency has deter-israel being a notable exam-

Officials have said previously that Iran may not sign an indefinite extension of the treaty if Israel refuses to join.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Europe has no role in Mideast peace talks — Harly

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon said on Friday the European Union (EU) has no significant role to play in Arab-Israeli peace talks. "Europe's role in the Arab-Israeli talks is not essential nor effective... the United States is the main power behind pushing the peace talks forward," Prime Minister Rafik Hariri said. He was commenting to Lebanese journalists on last week's tour of Syria, Israel. Gaza and Lebanon by French Foreign Minister Alain: Juppe at the head of an EU delegation seeking to push forward the Middle East peace process.

Cyprus capital changes name to Lefkosia

NICOSIA (R) - Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, has changed its name to Lefkosia as part of a campaign on the island to standardise spellings of place names. The change voted unanimously by the municipal council late on Thursday makes the spelling conform to the way the city's name is pronounced in Greek, Mayor Lellos Demetriades said. "The government wants to standardise geographical names and Nicosia... is spelled as Lefkosia. I suggested that next to Lefkosia we have in brackets Nicosia to avoid confusion," Mr. Demetriades told Reuters. The decision must be reviewed by the republic's council of ministers as a matter of routine. Mr. Demetriades said the council had held up the name change briefly to consider whether it might cause confusion with the Turkish name for the city,

Stop smoking U.S. cigarettes — Hizbollah

BEIRUT (AFP) - The leader of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah movement in Lebanon, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, has called for a boycott of U.S. cigarettes and luxury items. "We call on our people to boycott U.S. products which they can do without, such as cigarettes and luxury items... because America is an economic market controlled by giant companies which control politics and the military," he said. Sheikh Nasrallah denounced the United States as the "real and principal enemy" of Islam and said the boycott should spread to other Arab and Muslim countries. He was speaking at a rally in the Bekaa Valley on Thursday night to commemorate the third anniversary of the death of his predecessor Sheikh Abbas Mussawi, who was killed in an İsraeli raid. Hizbollah's spiritual guide, Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, issued a similar call for a boycott last month in retaliation for Washington's decision to freeze U.S. assets of Muslim fundamentalist organisations and

Dissident to be tried in Iran court

TEHRAN (AFP) - A revolutionary court will try a nationalist opposition figure and former general who was arrested four months ago after he accused Iran of human rights violations, an opposition group said Friday. Azizollah Amir-Rahimi, 75, learned "he would be tried in a revolutionary court" when he was allowed to see his family at the prosecutor's office here on Thursday, the nationalist Party of the People of Iran (PPI) said. No trial date was given. The revolutionary courts were set up after the 1979 Islamic revolution to try major offences and are reputed for handing down stiff sentences.

NPT needs to be revised... before extension — Iran

tion of nuclear weapons."
"Iran attaches great importance to the NPT, but certain revisions are necessary," he said. All countries with nuclear arms should set "an exact date when they plan to destroy their weapons prior to the treaty's exten-

natories to renew the treaty indefinitely at a meeting due to be held in New York in April instead of adopting it for another limited period.

to smaller countries for

NPT," he said. Meanwhile, Mr. Zarif:

This is an interference in the internal affairs of other countries and a violation of NPT regulations," he said. Russia is helping Iran to complete a half-finished nuc-

Moscow has said that it'

would help Iran develop its nuclear energy industry despite U.S. warnings that Tehran might turn nuclear material for military pur-

But U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Monday that the United a States would continue to pressure Russia not to hand over nuclear technology to the Islamic republic.

facilities," Mr. Zarif said.

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

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Amsterdam (KL)
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The following listings are compiled f and the daily Arabic press. Readen the listed at the compiled the listed at the compiled the comp the listed time and place with the c

EXHIBITION Exhibition of handicrafts by Has

Ayoung America'' exhibit (with I Americans of all ages) at the An Exhibition of works by Qasim Al

Bank Complex Gallery. Book exhibition at the Royal Cu Exhibition of the works of Leba

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel: 773111-19

"Danielle Steel's Fine Things" 23:59 Stay the Night

PRAYER TIMES

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Greece is keen to see Cyp-

rus, partitioned into Greek

and Turkish communities

since 1974, join the union. It

has, however, been holding

off lifting its veto, demanding

various clarifications and

The customs union, which

foresees sharp two-way re-

ductions in trade barriers by

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751. Astronau International Church Tcl. 652526. Evangelical Latheran Church Tel: 824328. German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
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Tel. 81 | 295 WEATHER

The Evangelical Local Church in

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Skies will be partly cloudy with chance of scattered showers an winds southeasterly moderate. I Aqaba, winds will be norther
moderate and seas calm.

such as the customs union. 1996, would give Turkey European Union foreign some of the closest links to ministers have been working the EU of a non-member hard to agree a deal that country and unblock as much would allow Greece, Turas \$1 billion in aid. key's long-time rival, to drop its veto of the customs union.

Europarliament rules out early accord on Turkey

In exchange for Athens Greece does lift its veto at a lifting its objections, the EU scheduled March 6 meeting would begin negotiations on in Brussels, major hurdles EU membership with Cyprus still lie ahead. six months after the end of the bloc's review of its own future, which is due to begin

have long been critical of Turkey's human rights record, particularly its treat-ment of its Kurdish minority.

approval of the customs union conditional on interim

Thursday's move by the parliament means that even if

Europarliamentarians

In their resolution, they urged the Turkish government to reform the country's constitution "to better guarantee the protection of democracy and human

They said they would make

progress reports. British socialist Pauline Green, who heads the assembly's largest single political group, said on Tuesday that

parliament should reconsider the question in September. EU member states have also raised the issue of human rights in Turkey, but tend to agree that helping Turkey

economically is better than keeping it in the cold. "Isolating Turkey would not benefit the democratic forces but the trade must be linked to human rights," Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hielm-Wallen said on

Wednesday after talks with her Turkish counterpart. Murat Karayalcin. Turkey's Islam-based Welfare Party (RP) said on

Israeli police pelted with eggs while hunting for settler

HEBRON, occupied West of the man he calls "holy" Bank (AFP) - Israeli police were shooed off with rotten eggs and buckets of water as they tried to arrest a settlers' leader in the occupied West

Bank on Friday. Baruch Marzel, a leader of the outlawed Kach movement, evaded house arrest on Wednesday to pray at the grave in nearby Kyriat Arba of Hebron mosque killer Barch Goldstein.

Settlers kept six policemen at bay with rotten eggs and buckets of water to prevent them from arresting Mr. Marzel, who has a mobile phone and is constantly alerted of police movements.

but refused to give their The anti-Arab Kach movement was outlawed after the massacre and a dozen of its leaders, including Mr. Mar-

zel, were arrested for several months. All have since been released, although the move-

ocess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA

Police left empty-handed. "I am not afraid of the police," Mr. Marzel told Thursday the proposed customs deal with Europe ments of several are resamounted to treason. AFP after visiting the grave **JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR**

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 13, Aqaba 20 Humidity readings: Amman 65 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE **NUMBERS**

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NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Hanna Mansour Dr. Ratib Zaitoun ... Dr. Mahmond Amirch Dr. Abdul Rahim Mustafa

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INTERNATIONAL **AIRPORT Flights** This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia In-ternational Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be veri-**06:25** ...

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Embassy in Ar. close, as earlie

Home

Sweden to e to Jordan, e

By Elia Nasrallah

Jordan Times Staff Reporter AMMAN - The government of Sweden intends to expand the level of technic-at aid to Jordan as a means w bolster its ties with the Kingdom and help it meet the requirements of development, according to Sweden's Ambassador to Jordan Christian Bausch

The ambassador said that Sweden had been providing echnical assistance to the Ministry of Public Works. n the Traffic Department nimprove the condition of mads and reduce the numof accidents, to the Telecommunications Corpration (TCC), the Jor-Electricity Authority s well as the Department Antiquities. He said that since it assumed office last au-

ance to the Kingdom and promote its economic and political ties with the countries of the Middle East Referring to a recent Swedish government decison to apply austerity measures, the ambassador said the move was needed "in view of the serious financial crisis the Kingdom of

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w expand technical assist-

Each government department in Sweden has been instructed to cut down

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Sweden was facing at the

Australian tr arrives for ta strengthening

AMMAN (J.T.) — Austraa's Trade Minister Bob kMullan arrived in Amman iday on a three-day visit to wan for talks with governa officials and the busia community on strenglang trade and economic

between Australia and la an arrival statement, the Con malian minister expressof happiness for the visit and his country's satisfaction with the level of economic and trade relations with the King-

He stressed Canberra's desire to bolster Jordanian-Australian relations and increase the volume of trade between the two countries. The Australian minister, who is due to open his meetings with Jordanian officials Saturday, is accompanied by

businessmen representing major Australian firms. Mr. McMullan is also due to lead the Australian side to the joint Jordanian-Australian Economic and Trade Committee meetings lo explore further ways to Monote trade. Australia hopes to increase

large team of Australian

is sales of livestock, meat, iry products and cereal to Kingdom, and Jordan lopes to increase its sales of phosphate and fertilisers and orash to Australia, accordto government and Austalian embassy sources.

Mr. McMullan, who was relcomed at the airport by Minister of Industry and Inde Ali Abul Ragheb, is to due to formally inaugu-

WHAT'S GO

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JBA

Play (in Arabic) entitled "You A Royal Cultural Centre at 9:00

Royal Cultural Centre. Photo exhibition at the Friends of

basha at Darat Al Funun. Also contemporary Arab artists.

5 IN BRIEF

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Embassy in Amman not to close, as earlier decided

Sweden to expand aid to Jordan, envoy says

By Elia Nasrallah Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government of Sweden intends to expand the level of technical aid to Jordan as a means to bolster its ties with the Kingdom and help it meet the requirements of development, according to Sweden's Ambassador to Jordan Christian Bausch Friday.

The ambassador said that Sweden had been providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Public Works, to the Traffic Department to improve the condition of roads and reduce the number of accidents, to the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC), the Jordan Electricity Authority as well as the Department of Antiquities.

He said that since it assumed office last autumn, the Swedish govern-ment had taken a decision to expand technical assistance to the Kingdom and promote its economic and political ties with the countries of the Middle East

Referring to a recent Swedish government decision to apply austerity measures, the ambassador said the move was needed "in view of the serious financial crisis the Kingdom of Sweden was facing at the moment.

Each government department in Sweden has been instructed to cut down

expenses, the Foreign Ministry, for its part, is bound to save \$24 million,

said Mr. Bausch. An initial .decision taken by Sweden to close down 15 diplomatic missions abroad to save funds was cancelled and only two embassies and two consulates are to be affected by the decision.

"I am happy to say that Jordan is excluded from the Foreign Ministry's decision which was taken for purely financial reasons," said the ambassador.

"Since there is no political reason behind the austerity programme, the Foreign Ministry in Stockholm has decided to implement the programme by not clos-ing diplomatic missions but rather through changing the approach and through a shift in the concept," continued the ambassador.

He said that the Foreign Ministry hopes to ensure the success of the austerity programme for at least three coming years by cutting down on expenses like diplomats' benefits, opting for cheaper housing for them and other similar

means. Despite the austerity programme, the ambassador added, Sweden will continue to supply capital aid to the poor countries, especially those in Africa, through the European Union (EU) which Sweden has joined since the beginning of this year.

Australian trade team arrives for talks on strengthening ties

AMMAN (J.T.) — Australia's Trade Minister Bob McMullan arrived in Amman Friday on a three-day visit to Jordan for talks with government officials and the business community on strengthening trade and economic ties between Australia and Jordan.

In an arrival statement, the Australian minister expressed happiness for the visit and his country's satisfaction with the level of economic and trade relations with the King-

He stressed Canberra's desire to bolster Jordanian-Australian relations and increase the volume of trade

The Australian minister, who is due to open his meetings with Jordanian officials Saturday, is accompanied by a large team of Australian businessmen representing

Mr. McMullan is also due to lead the Australian side to the joint Jordanian-Australian Economic and Trade Committee meetings to explore further ways to

stralian embassy sources. Mr. McMullan, who was welcomed at the airport by first inspect. Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb, is Officials have also due to formally inspect.

rate the regional office for the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation (AMLC) located in Jabai Amman. The office is entrusted with the task of promoting Australian trade with Middle Eastern countries, including Jordan.

The Amman Chamber of that Mr. McMullan and members of the Australian delegation are due to hold a meeting Sunday with Jordanian merchants and businessmen led by Haidar Murad, president of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce to discuss trade

Mr. Murad said that the Jordanian side will try to urge the Australians to import more Jordanian products to help adjust the balance of trade between the two coun-

Federation sources said that the Australian delega-tion's visit assumes significance especially as it comes at the start of the peace era in

the Middle East. Jordan, which enjoys a central location in the area, hopes to attract foreign investments and promote its trade links with other countries, said the sources.

The Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA) also announced that Mr. McMullan and the accompanying delegation will hold a general meeting with the Jordanian businessmen Saturday, led by JBA Chairman Hamdi Tab-

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

PLAYS

Contract the state of the state Play (in Arabic) entitled "You Are Not Youself" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 9:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

🛱 Exhibition of handicrafts by Hasmig Kuymjian at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Photo exhibition at the Friends of Archaeology Center. "Young America" exhibit (with photographs featuring Americans of all ages) at the American Center. Exhibition of works by Qasim Al Samir at the Housing

Bank Complex Gallery. Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre. Exhibition of the works of Lebanese artist Amin Al

Basha at Darat Al Funun. Also showing works by contemporary Arab artists.



Prophet Mohammad's followers and his official (Petra photo)

FRIDAY SERMONS — His Royal opponents who mobilised their forces Highness Crown Prince Hassan attends against him in a bid to stop the Islamic Friday prayers at the Jubeiha grand dawa from spreading into the Arab Peninmosque. The Crown Prince listened to the sula. The Friday preacher said the Badr Friday sermon which focused on the battle was a turning point in the history of lessons learnt from the Badr battle which the Islamic dawa. Also attending Friday took place on 17 Ramadan between prayer were senior military and civil

Businesses warned against 'unclear' potential Nigerian clients

By P.V. Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN - Jordanian businessmen have been warned against doing business with any Nigerian company without clearing the background of the potential client with the Nigerian authorities, officials and businessmen said Friday.

The warning was issued after cases surfaced of a new Nigerian con scheme involving manufacturers of satellite dishes in Jordan, they said. Nigeria is internationally

notorious for genuinesounding deals that hold out promises of millions of dollars in quick profits but turn out to be nothing but Law enforcement in this African country is also

weak, and many who have had experience in dealing with Nigerian firms say that a large segment of the officialdom also appeared to be partners in crime with The officials and businessmen said the latest

warning was issued by the Amman Chamber of Com merce, which had received a notification from the Nigerian embassy in Bagh-dad. According to the officials

and businessmen, the new Nigerian scam involved orders for satellite dishes, a mushrooming industry in

They said manufacturers received orders for satellite dishes by the dozen but there were no letters of

credit - the accepted traditional way of doing business - to support the

Instead, the importer, "in order to avoid costly banking charges and delays as Nigerians are anxious to use the dishes to watch football games," would offer to settle the payment by cheque against shipping

The orders gathered additional air of authenticity, given that Nigeria was supposed to be hosting the World Youth Soccer Cup. The games have been cancelled but it appears that the con scheme was hatched at the height of expectations that they would go ahead as planned.

"The cheques issued by the so-called importers turned out to be forged, and there was no legal recourse by the exporter to recover his money since the importers had ceased to exist at the addresses as given in the orders," said an official of the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

Thousands of offices operate in Lagos, the Nigerian capital, which offer question, allowing the confidence tricksters to have a "respectable" address in Lagos but with little legi-

"You can change office addresses in Lagos more easier than you can change your shirt." commented a Jordanian who studied in Africa.

The scam over satellite dishes is a revised version of a con scheme which

in the last two years. That scheme involved authenticsounding invitations to Jordanian businessmen to help spirit tens of millions of dollars out of Nigeria described as commission to be paid to senior Nigerian government officials that needed a foreign cover to be transferred outside the country - and receive up to 20 per cent as fees for

'services rendered.'

Hundreds, if not thousands, in Jordan received such invitations during the late 1980s and early 90s. Many took up the invitation and went ahead. but most of them stepped back at a stage when several thousand dollars had to be committed into the scam before the "millions" could be extracted. But several others threw caution to the winds, went "all the way," and never heard of the thousands they paid let alone the promised mil-

Again; none of the victims - not only from Jordan but from practically every country - had legal recourse to recover their very illegality of the scheme dissuaded them from approaching the Nigerian government with com-

The determined few who went after their money to Lagos suffered more losses - some were kept hostage in their hotel rooms until their families paid ransom - and were often expelled from the country on trumped-up charges.

Swaqa prison to skill- train more inmates, expand scope of operations

workshops at Swaqa prison, south of Amman, are planning to expand their operations and increase the number of inmates wishing to learn a trade and do productive work, according to pris-on director, Colonel Hassan

Smadi Friday. He said that the prison operates leather, carpentry and blacksmiths workshops which produce woodwork and metal products like school desks, and metal cupboards, as well as different types of leather products.

The move to expand comes in light of the Council of Minister's instructions to government departments to order their needs of wood and metal products from the prison whenever this is possible, said Col. Smadi.

He said that the Ministry of Education has given its consent to buying at least 30 per

AMMAN (Petra) - The cent of its requirements for school rooms from the prison's workshops. According to Col. Smadi,

the prison workshops also include a laundry which can cater to the needs of large numbers of hotels and other organisations since it starts to fully operate. At present the laundry is covering the needs of the nearby community colleges, added Col. Smadi.

He said that the prison is operating a livestock project. in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, and large areas of land have been reclaimed and planted with fruit trees and animal feed.

These workshops, he explained, are all operating under the direct supervision of specialists and technicians who are helping the inmates transform their life and learn a trade for their future. Major General Moham-

Security Department director, and Brigadier Ali Abul Isam, director of the reformatory centres (prisons), the inmates at Swaq2 prison are encouraged to learn trades, enjoy regular health care from the Health Ministry, religious guidance from the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Culture in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, as well as sports programmes.

The prison administration, they said, have worked out plans for improving the sanitary services, sports facilities and vocational workshops during 1995.

They added that plans are under way for creating another vocational training centre at Yajouz and for transforming the centre in Jweideh to serve women prisoners only.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Livestock market to open in Madaba tions issued by the municipality. The regula-

MADABA (Petra) - The Madaba Munici-Madaba Deputy Mayor Maddallah Al Tarawworked on preparing the 15-dunum market.

Mayor to study dealers' cases

on the outskirts of Amman, the new regula- Emirates, Oman as well as Jordan.

tions ban dealers from trading in cement and iron in the above areas in view of the hazards pality has finalised work on a site which will they cause to the environment. Dr. Abbadi serve as the city's new livestock market. noted that the new regulations were issued in response to complaints by residents of these neh said the municipality's machineries have areas. The regulations provide that such construction materials should be stored in The municipality, Mr. Tarawneh said, has special warehouses. Following a lengthy discussion, the mayor promised to study each ing livestock to avoid traffic jams near the

Diving courses organised in Aqaba

AMMAN (Petra) — Greater Amman Mayor AQABA (Petra) — The Royal Diving Club in Mamdouh Al Abbadi Friday discussed with Aqaba is currently organising two diving construction cement and iron dealers in Tla'a courses for 18 trainees from the United Al Ali, Khalda and Umm Al Summaq areas, Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, the United Arabi

Jordan, PNA reach detailed trade accord

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) have reached a detailed agreement on trade, as called for in the accord signed by the Kingdom and the PNA in January, clearing the way for direct trade and setting out items that would enjoy preferential treatment from the two sides.

It was the first Jordan-PNA agreement reached after the signing of the broader agreement and six other sectoral accords on Jan. 26 by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and PNA President Yasser Arafat.

The accord replaces all effective agreements that guided Palestinian products through the Kingdom since

More significantly, it opens the door for Jordanian exports, albeit limited, to the Palestinian market for the first time since 1967. The trade agreement, drawn in three days of talks

between a PNA team headed by economic and trade expert Samir Huleileh and Jordanian officials led by Ministry of Industry and Trade Assistant Under-Secretary Shawki Haddadin, now awaits final endorsement by the Jordanian government and the PNA cabinet

based in Gaza. The accord covers the Palestinian autonomous territories of Gaza and Jericho as well as the rest of the West Bank where the PNA hopes to expand its self-rule in negotiations with Israel.

The PNA team left Amman on Friday. The trade accord is expected to be placed before the PNA cabinet during its regular weekly meeting on Saturday and, given the urgency to launch direct trade, Mr. Arafat is expected to give his endorsement soon to the agreement.

No details were immediately available on the goods that the agreement covers, but, in principle, Officials said, more than 100 industrial products are included in a list of goods for preferential treatment. These goods will enjoy

complete duty-free status, but local sales tax will be applied on them. Another agreement that

streamlined agricultural trade between the two sides is expected to take effect immediately. This accord was sorted

out in talks between Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif and Azzam Tubbeileh, under-secretary of agriculture in the PNA.

Further talks will be held between the two sides to work out the mechanisms to guide export-import operations.

Jordan will continue to allow the transit of Palestinian produce through the Kingdom's territory but the Palestinian authority will issue its own certificates of origin instead of a Jordanian one used since 1967, Reuter reported. It was not immediately

clear whether the trade accord set any ceiling for imports and exports between the Kingdom and the Palestinian territories. Jordan had been aiming at a ceiling-free accord and the Palestinians have been arguing that they could not accept such an arrangement because of their limited import volume that they also want to use while negotiating trade accords

with other parties. Furthermore, an economic accord signed by the PNA and Israel in April binds the Palestinians into arrangements that do not permit free trade with Jordan, they say. The list of day includes the items that Israel would permit the PNA to import from Jordan under the April agree-

Meanwhile, Mr. Huleileh was quoted as saying that the list of dutyproducts would speed up deals between the private sectors of the two sides.

Minister of Trade Ali Abul Ragheb told Reuter that final touches to the agreement would be put during a meeting with Palestinian Economy Minister Ahmad Qouries in late February.

According to Reuter, the goods were defined as complementary and noncompetitive — meaning that none of the products given preferential treatment will pose a threat to

the local products. Jordanian officials have said that the Israel-PNA economic agreement. under which Israel effectively maintained its role as the dominant market power in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, restricted the scope of Jordanian-Palestinian trade.

The Israel-PNA agreement is very detailed and specifically lists items that the self-rule authority could import from Jordan and excludes many pro-ducts that Jordanian businessmen say they could sell to the Palestinians.

The Israeli argument is that the Jewish state cannot allow such products to enter the Palestinian territories with whom it has a free-trade accord since the products could easily end up in the Israeli market

PNA officials argue that it was a price that the Palestinians had to pay Israel in return for the Jewish state's agreement to accept the establishment of a Palestinian monetary authority and currency.

Paediatricians to hold conference

AMMAN (Petra) - A threeday international Arab ference. paediatric conference will be Dr. Qudah said 1,000 ld at the University of Ior. dan's Prince Hassan auditorium, under Royal patronage, starting with April 12.

The conference will discuss several working papers covering such topics as newborns, premature deliveries and communicable and contagious diseases, according to Abdul Karim Al Qudah. president of the Jordanian Paediatric Association (JPA)

which is organising the con-

of paediatrics from 21 Arab and foreign countries will attend the meeting.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Qudah said several specialised scientific symposia will be held, in addition to a lecture on the evolution and

development of health services to children in Jordan.

A specialised symposium

on children's rights, and child abuse will also be held, in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the University of Jordan, Dr. Qudah said.

He added that a medical exhibition will also be held on the sideline of the conference, noting that major local, Arab and international companies dealing with medical equipment will take part in the exhibition.

ANZ Grindlays Bank

extends a warm welcome to

THE AUSTRALIAN MINISTER FOR TRADE THE HONOURABLE SENATOR

Bob McMullan

and the delegates of the

AUSTRALIAN - JORDANIAN TRADE COMMITTEE

visiting Jordan on 18 - 19 February

ANZ Grindlays Bank In Jordan since 1925

French writer

PARIS (AFP) - French, with

ter Francoise Sagan facetta

possible 18-month suspended jail sentence and a 50,000 franc (\$9,300) fine on charges of possessing and handling

cocaine. Prosecutor Bernan

Fos called for the writer, who has been on trial since February

along with 25 other defen

dants, to receive the sent ences in connection with the

offences, which allegediy occurred in 1992. Sagan, who

appeared in court Wednes.

day for the first time since the

trial began, said she does not

currently use cocaine, but that at the time of the alleged offences it "helped her" lo

lowing a number of bereav ments. The writer defended

her right to use drugs. Every human being is free if his or her freedom does not affect that of others," told the

court. "Laws are made to be

adopted to people and for the other way round." San was given a six-month pended sentence and a 10000

franc (\$1,800) fine for a simi-lar offence in March 1999 in

Lyon. The Paris prosecutor

urged penalties ranging from

three months suspended to

seven years for the other

defendants involved in the

case, who allegedly range from casual users to full-time

Vanessa Paradis

drugs possession:

MONTREAL (R) - French

singer and actress Vanessa

Paradis was arrested at Mon-

treal's Dorval Airport and

charged with possession of hashish, the Canadian Press

(CP) news agency reported,

U.S. custom officers say they

found about three grammes

(0.1 ounces) of hashish in her

luggage, according to CP. Pa-

radis was on her way to New

York City, it said. She was

released after posting a \$500

bond and was ordered to

appear in court in Montreal

next month, CP said, CP

quoted reports as saying Pa-

radis then got on a plane to go back home to Paris. French radio reported Paradis had

been in Canada to promote

the film Elisa with actor

'God Must Have

Forgotten Me'

arrested for

traffickers.

cocaine trial

accused in

Business

Mandela pledges war on crime 🔡

S. African police block students after protests

President Nelson Mandela Friday vowed to fight corruption, crime and racism as he reopened South Africa's parliament, defending his gov-ernment's record in the wake of strong criticism.

Inaugurating the second session of the first democratically elected parliament, Mr. Mandela also promised an "investor-friendly climate" under continued fiscal disci-

On Tuesday, Mr. Mandela's own estranged wife Winnie, who has a deputy minister's post, compelled to make a public apology for a scathing attack on the govern-ment, which she had accused in a speech of failing to tackle racism in the workplace.

The administration has also come under fire in some quarters for alleged pamper-" ing to the white minority in its bid for national reconciliation and failing to address black majority needs.

While not directly addressing critics, Mr. Mandela acknowledged that the government, which took office after the first all-race elections in April 1994, had made mistakes, but said this was "an inevitable element in the process of learning."

"It is always the case that the spectators are better than the players on the field," he

'Whatever the teething problems," Mr. Mandela said, the government of national unity "has succeeded in its intentions of

MEXICO CITY (AFP) -

ensuring cooperation among our people as a whole." In a speech critical of

habits acquired both by whites and blacks under apartheid, Mr. Mandela warned against racism, violence and disruption as a means of achieving political ends. "The battle against the

forces of anarchy anti chaos has been joined," he said. "Let no one say they have not been warned."

Addressing "those who have... misread freedom to mean license," Mr. Mandela said: "Let me... make this abundantly clear that the small minority in our midst which wears the mask of anarchy will meet its match in the government.
"We are not afraid of

struggle. We are, after all, a product of confrontation and

struggle."

The rising crime rate "cannot be tolerated," he declared. "We must take the war to the criminals and no longer allow the situation in which are mere sitting ducks.

He called for community support of law enforcement agencies, reiterating a promise that the government "has no intention to conduct a witchhunt against the police" for offences committed under

apartheid. Racism was still a scourge, Mr. Mandela said, referring as a latest example to the nots at Ruyterwacht near where whites demonstrated violently to prevent the busing of black children to a formerly white school.

"Those who are responsible for these crimes of racism must be brought to book without delay," he said. "It is clear that insufficient prog-ress has been made... to deal with this cancer.

"The situation cannot be allowed in which anyone acts in a manner which perpetuates the practice of apartheid.

Corruption - an issue that has gained prominence with recent accusations against African National Congress veterans Alian Boesak and Winnie Mandela — is a legacy of apartheid that "has deeply infected the fibre of our society," Mr. Mandela

But he stressed that it should be fought in a fair and iust manner. "At all times we must

guarantee the right of the accused to be head, without making any concession to the primeval instinct to pillory and burn people at the stake." he said.

"We need to educators with the regard to the matter of rooting out corruption, which we will deal with firmly

and unequivocally, whoever may be involved," he said. Mr. Mandela warned that the government "has extremely limited resources to address the many and urgent needs of our people."
"All of us... must rid

ourselves of the wrong notion that the government has a big bag full of money," he said. "The government does not have such riches." "There are signs that our

economy is beginning to pick up," he said, vowing to seek 'sustained and high levels of economic growth ... (and) in particular to ensure the creation of an investor friendly

"I would ... like to emphasize our continuing commitment to fiscal discipline, Mr. Mandela said.

President Mandela, reaffirming the new South Afri-ca's place in the family of nations, Friday pledged par-ticular attention to his country's relations with its southern African neighbours.

In the foreign policy seg-ment of his state of the nation address, Mr. Mandela said he was "inspired by the reality of progressive developments in our region."

He cited the elections in Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique and Namibia, the restoration of democracy in Lesotho with the reinstatement of King Moshoeshoe II and the signing of the Angola peace agreement.

'All this augurs well for the future of our people," he

Mr. Mandela warned. however, against "tensions that are building up with regard to population movements within our region."

"We must treat this matter with all due sensitivity, conscious of the history of our region, including the destruction caused by the policy of aggression and destabilisation" of South Africa's previous apartheid regime, he

A woman pleads with bystanders after she was reserved for whites. The protest came as mugged and robbed off her glasses and other belongings during a protest by 10,000 schoolwhites in the working class suburb of Ruyterwacht said they would not allow black pupils to children in Cape Town city centre Thursday. The protesting pupils flocked to government

"In all our actions," Mr. Mandela said, "we must in Beijing later in the year will be crucial fora in which move from the position that we should make our own the fundamental objective we must pursue is friendship, humble contribution to the effort to create a better cooperation and solidarity

world," he said. Meanwhile, armed police revented hundreds of black children from leaving a South African township Friday, following days of racial incidents between angry whites and thousands of blacks being bused to a suburban

Cape Town school. Four buses carrying children were stopped by police on a main motorway into Cape Town where several people were mugged and fruit-stalls trashed by protest-

ing children Thursday. Some of the children trying to get to the city were from among thousands who earlier

suburb. The provincial government Thursday closed the school

saying it was a health risk. Provincial Education Minister Martha Olckers said black students had caused extensive damage to the school, breaking toilets, wash basins and water pipes.

Pupils and teachers, prevented from going to Cape Town, told reporters they were determined to get to the

"We are marching to Guguletu where we will get on the trains and go to tow. a student said.

At Ruyterwacht, 15 kilometres away, whites armed with clubs, chains and whips were out in force in case the black students returned to the school.

use the vacant school in their area (AFP photo) tional Women's Conference school in the mainly-white working-class Ruyterwacht

Britain revokes 10 N. Irish exclusion

among the peoples of our

He reiterated South Afri-

ca's "willingness to contri-

bute whatever we can" to

establish peace and democra-

South Africa seeks an active part in the debate on

the new world order, focus-

ing in particular on such mat-

ters as a democratic interna-

tional political order, univer-

sal prosperity, peace and sta-bility — all of which are

questions of great relevance

to our own continent of Afri-

"The U.N. Social Summit

cy in Angola.

The Mexican army will remain in Chiapas despite the Zapatista rebels' demand "The organisation has conthat troops be withdrawn from the southern state before peace talks can begin, the Interior Ministry said. The attorney general and

the Mexican army "will maintain their presence in Chiapas under any circumstance... to guarantee the local population's security and prevent acts of violence," the ministry said in a statement late Thursday.

President Ernesto Zedillo last week ordered a crackdown against the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) to end their 13month confrontation in impoverished Chiapas, but called it off on Wednesday inviting the guerrillas to resume peace negotiations.

A Zapatista leader Ana Maria Thursday said: "The EZLN is willing to talk to resolve the conflict," but added that before negotiations could begin Chiapas had to be cleared of federal

Mr.Zedillo also ordered arrest warrants against top rebel chief Subcommander Marcos, and other Zapatista leaders, which Ana Maria

also demanded be lifted. The London-based human rights group Amnesty International said in a statement Thursday that the Mexican military had engaged in torture, arbitrary arrests and

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Republican dissenters held

firm against a party commit-

ment to missile defences, giv-

ing the majority leadership

an unexpected lesson in the

limits of its newly gained

But Republicans prevailed

in cutting U.S. support for

United Nations peacekeep-

ing, a move that Secretary of

State Warren Christopher

Thursday denounced as "a

threat to this and every future

president's authority to pro-

tect the security of the United

Moments after the house

voted 241 to 181 in favour of

a bill setting a Republican tone for U.S. foreign and

defence policy. Speaker.

Newt Gingrich dismissed

Wednesday's vote on a

national missile defence sys-

tem as a "man bites dog"

interpretation, of what hap-

145 votes (in the new Con-

gress), we've lost one amend-

ment," he said. "We think

overall that's pretty asto-

The Republican leadership

had planned to revive the

missile defence provision

Thursday but backed off

when it became clear that not

enough dissenters would

For some of the 24 Repub-

licans who deserted the lead-

change their votes.

"It is true that having had

Mexican army to stay in Chiapas other abuses in trying to put down an indigenous uprising

> firmed reports that scores of people have been arbitrarily detained and reportedly tortured and ill-treated, in Chiapas, Mexico City and other parts of the country, the human rights group said in a statement.

'Several remain 'disappeared'," Amnesty said. It called for the Mexican government to protect the human rights of the population and to investigate and punish any violations.

"The army carried out arrests of civilians and effectively prevented free access and transit to journalists, human rights monitors and even an International Committee of the Red Cross delegate,"

Amnesty added. Earlier Thursday, Reuters reporters said the Mexican army's advance deep into Zapatista guerrilla territory had apparently been achieved without human

rights atrocities. They quoted villagers as saying some beatings and illegal detentions took place, but found no proof of rebel claims that the army tortured civilians or bombarded villages in its week-old offen-

While many pro-guerrilla villages had been turned into ghost towns as their residents fled from the army's advance in the southern state of

Republican dissenters hold fast

ership Wednesday night, the issue was a basic conflict be-

tween two goals of the Re-

America" - a national mis-

sile defence and a balanced

Spratt Jr., a Democrat, spon-

sor of the amendment that

stripped language that re-

quired the Secretary of De-

fence to bring Congress a

plan for deployment of a

national ballistic missile de-

Embarrassed on that one

issue, the Republican major-

ity worked its will on the

other portions of the bill. As

it passed the House, the mea-

sure would cut back on U.S.

financial support for U.N.

peacekeeping and encourage early admission of Poland,

Hungary, the Czech Republic

In addition, it restricts the

Mr. Christopher said he

was dismayed by the bill's passage and the "harmful im-

pact it would have no our

bill would eliminate

peacekeeping as an instru-

ment of U.S. foreign poucy

and "... remove an option

that every American presi-

"Intentionally or not, the

authority of the president to

place U.S. troops under fore-

ign commanders.

national security"

and Slovakia into NATO.

"Budget reality dawned on

said Rep. John M.

federal budget.

fence system.

against missile defence system

Chiapas, reporters who were allowed into the conflict zone found no firm evidence of widespread abuses.

In several small villages that leaders of the rebel Zapatista National Liberation Army said had been strafed by army machinegun fire, there were no signs of any such attack.

A U.N. agency Thursday urged Mexico to pull its troops out of Chiapas and stop its campaign against Maya Indian rebels.
The UNESCO conference,

which gathers representatives of indigenous people around the world, also urged Peru and Ecuador to stop fighting and settle their jungle dispute.

Nobel Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu, herself a Maya Indian from Guatemala, told a news conference these were not Indian conflicts but they were taking place in Indian areas and endangering local popula-

The conference passed a statement drafted by Indian delegates from Ecuador and Peru urging the two countries to declare an indefinite truce. They declared a ceasefire

Tuesday in the conflict over their ill-defined border in the remote Cordillera Del Condor in the jungle foothills of the Andes.

The conference also urged the Mexican government to pull its troops out of the southern region of Chiapas

dent since Harry Truman has

used to advance our in-

that this measure is not the

end of their efforts to reshape

last word on defence," said majority leader Richard

Armey.
"We have appropriations

bills coming. ... There are

many ways to make our point," said Mr. Gingrich.

Perry said he was profoundly

concerned about the provi-

sion restricting the placement

of U.S. troops under foreign

not impossible, coalition war-

fare." Mr. Perry said. "I'm

implacably opposed to this

At the White House,

spokesman Mike McCurry

said, "it makes little sense to

pour billions and billions of

dollars into a defence shield

that may or may not work."

Clinton told Mr. Gingrich in

a letter that the bill was

Neither Mr. Gingrich nor

House Republican whip Tom

Delay of Texas, would specu-

overriding a veto. The mea-

sure first must go to the

Senate, where its prospects

are uncertain.

simply unacceptable."

Earlier. President Bill

"It would make difficult, if

Defence Secretary William

The Republican leadership

'This is not this Congress's

terests.

defence policy.

command.

feature.

next month and the Internathis week occupied an empty orders

LONDON (Agencies) — Britain said Friday that improved security in Northern Ireland meant it was lifting the last 10 "exclusion orders which prevented designated individuals travelling freely between the province and

mainland Britain. Britain and Ireland are trying measures to cement peace in Northern Ireland, after ceasefires six montsh ago ended a 25-year-old civil war that cost 3,200 lives.

In the latest step, Northern Ireland Secretary Sir Patrick Mayhew said in a statement: "On the basis of security advice... there is no longer a need to maintain those exclusion orders for which I am responsible.

He said Home Secretary ing a separate 56 exclusion orders for which he was responsible and would announce his conclusions la-

Sir Patric said he hoped the government would be able to do away with special powers it has under an emergency provisions act that allows for controversial, non-jury trials in the British-ruled province.

"The government's hope is that a lasting peace will prove to be established and that the need for the exceptional powers provided by this act will accordingly be removed," he

LONDON (R) - British vo-

ters and opinion polls under-

lined the unpopularity of

Prime Minister John Major

Friday and opposition leader

Tony Blair said the Con-

servative government was pa-

ralysed by its splits over

The Conservative candi-

date at a parliamentary by-

election in south Wales

Thursday suffered a humiliat-

ing defeat, finishing a poor

fourth with less than four per

An opinion poll for the

Guardian newspaper pre-

dicted that in a general elec-

tion the Conservatives would

trail 18 percentage points be-hind the opposition Labour

Labour leader Blair sought

to capitalise on Conservative

division after a week in which

government ministers public-

cent of the vote.

Europe.

said. "In the meantime, the government will be keeping the need for the powers under continuing review."

The apprehensions of Northern Ireland's Protestant majority boiled over Thursday in the House of Commons, as one lawmaker suggested he had no reason to trust Prime Minister John Major and his government.

The harsh words from Ulster Unionist lawmaker Roy Beggs followed hours after three of his colleagues released a letter to Mr. Maior. The letter warned that Northern Ireland's largest party probably would reject British and Irish proposals for a peace settlement if they threatened the province's

Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring said Tuesday that those proposals - intended as the foundation for interparty talks on Northern Ireland's future — may be pub-

lished as early as next week. Both governments want to get pro-British Protestant and Irish Catholic blocs to sit down together and agree on a middle-of-the-road package. which would establish strong ties between the British-ruled

north and independent south. "Can you give us one valid reason why we as Ulster Unionists should not question

disagreed about a single

'A fault line runs

through the entirety of the

Conservative Party, and if they can't resolve this, then I

think you've effectively got

paralysis of government poli-

"You have now got many people within the Conserva-

tive Party... who are effec-

tively saying that Britain should withdraw from the

Mr. Blair said Labour had

scored a fine victory in win-

ning Thursday's by-election

The seat, a Labour stron-

ghold, fell vacant when the

party's former leader Neil

Kinnock joined the Euro-

of the vote in Islwyn slumped

The Conservatives' share

Islwyn in south Wales.

European Union.'

pean Commission.

Mr. Blair told BBC

European currency.

Radio.

your integrity and that of .. even the prime minister?' Mr. Beggs asked Michael Ancram, a senior British minister in Northern Ireland, as Conservative lawmakers reacted with cries of

"We feel we have not only been deceived, but we have been betrayed," said Mr. Beggs, considered the most moderate of the nine Ulster Unionist lawmakers in parliament.

"Don't you understand the depths of Unionist frustration, that we perceive there has been capitulation to pannationalism and to IRA thugs who threaten to use their guns and Semtex (explosive) if their will isn't expressed in

Mr. Ancram responded: "I hope you will reconsider those remarks when the joint framework document is published and you are able to see what is in it.'

In the Ulster Unionist's letter to Mr. Major, lawmakers William Ross, Martin Smyth and David Trimble said the chance of a lasting peace was being destroyed by the "greed and intransigence" of Irish nationlists. who want an end to Northern Ireland's union with Britain.

They reiterated the party's objections to creating any

to 3.9 per cent from 14.8 per

cent at the 1992 general elec-

tion. It was the third worst

Conservative by-election per-

formance since World War

of his cabinet Thursday they

should stick closely to policy

in public and not be drawn

after Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer (Finance Minister)

Kenneth Clarke denied in a

newspaper interview that a

single European currency

would threaten Britain's posi-

Clarke at odds with anti-

European ministers, includ-

ing Jonathan Aitken, his

number two at the treasury,

who said he would hesitate

for an eternity before taking

Britain into a single currency.

That argument put Mr.

tion as a nation state.

The warning was delivered

into "speculative debate."

Mr. Major told members

wield power in both the Irish Republic and Northern Ire-"The creation of all-Ireland institutions with gov-

ernmental powers to treat

new authorities that would

Ireland as one unit for any matter is the antithesis of Unionism. Cooperation and even cross-border bodies, properly defined, are one thing, all-Ireland bodies are quite another matter," the letter said. Mr. Major's office said ne was determined to press

ahead with the joint proposal. In Dublin, the Irish capital, Premier John Bruton appealed to all sides to withhold indgment. "When the document is

published it will, I believe, become clear that it is manifestly fair to both the nationalist and Unionist traditions on this island," Mr. Bruton said. Both governments in De-

cember 1993 proposed negotiations among all Northern Ireland parties that renounced violence. The Irish Republican Army began an open-ended truce on Sept. 1, opening the way for preliminarv talks between Britain and the IRA-allied Sinn Fein party. Pro-British "loyalist" pa-ramilitary groups matched th eIRA ceasefire in mid-October... Major rocked by divisions over Europe, polls

Thursday, Mr. Major said in

a letter to Labour finance

spokesman Gordon Brown

that a single currency would

raise significant "economic

and political and constitu-

Mr. Clarke's predecessor,

Norman Lamont, was ex-

pected to pour fuel on the

flames with a speech insisting

that a single currency would

inevitably be a step on the

road to a united states of

In the ICM opinion poll

published in the Guardian,

Labour had 49 per cent of the

national vote against 31 per

cent for the Conservatives.

This was after polisters ad-

justed raw polling figures in

the ruling party's favour to

reflect the known reluctance

of Conservatives at present to

admit they support the party.

tional issues."

Europe.

PARIS (AP) — God Must

Gerard Depardieu.

Have Forgotten Me, Jeanne Calment is fond of saying, and, according to some accounts, the world's — is preparing to celebrate her 120th birthday Tuesday." "I've had a beautiful life," she said in an interview published Thursday in the newspaper Le Figaro. "With good health, one is happy. "I'm still as hungry as a wolf, & 120-year-old stomach..." southwestern town of Arles; where she still lives, has out lasted her husband and her brother. Her daughter and grandson also are dead, so she has no direct descendants. But she has wonderful memories, she says. "In spoiled, spoiled," she told it Figaro. She remember travelling to Paris and dining at the restaurant of the Eine Tower when it was still under

India's 'Bandit Queen' embraces Buddhism

here. Dressed in white, Ms Devi and her husband Umaid Singh, took the non-violence before five monks at a sprawling park in verted to the Buddhist faith. Ms. Devi took the vows after "Buddha Putri" or Buddha ra" (Buddha's son). Buddisism is not a religion. way of life and the passage peace which leads people it. peace which leads personal the path of social ment, the former of told the crowd after feet

construction.

NAGPUR. India (AFP)
Indian "Bandit Queen
Phoolan Devi, who spent it
years behind bars for alleged
by gunning down 22 many avenge her gang rape embraced the Buddhist faut Buddhist vows of peace and this western Indian city, some 450 kilometres (281 miles) from Bombay. Cheered by crowd of 15,000 low-caster Hindus who had also con-Mr. Singh, amid chants and prayers, witnesses said. I do as my husband does, said to Dhamma Vino, Buddhist monk who was her spiritual mentor during her years in prison. Ms. Devis who is in her early 30s and comes from a low-caste Hatdu family, was rechristened daughter while her spods took the name Buddha Put

usiness Taily eat

A review from the Arabic press

CBJ eases pressure th The Central Bank of Jor-

dan (CBJ) cancelled a memorandum it issued last nouth concerning ceilings on monus confictions. According to the January memorandum, a bank was limited to extend no more than 15 per cent of is capital and legal reserves is direct credit facilities to any single borrower. The peranyambic was 25 per cent for any interrelated group of bor-rowers. Indirect credit faciliies were limited to 25 per tent to any single borrower and 40 per cent to any inenelated group of borrowers. The CBJ is reportedly preparing an amended preparing an amended dude new steps that would be easier and simpler to carry out. These would give a sixmonth reprieve to traders. industrialists and businessmen to meet the new limits (Al Aswaq).

The Tourism Investment Department of the Social Security Corporation (SSC) denied that its hotel at Petra had been sold or that there is any intention to sell it to a foreign company. The corporation is only negotiating with Forum, the company that manages the hotel, to also manage the Petra resthouse, which is currently under the direct management of the SSC (Al Dustour).

** Jordan's Middle East In-

vestment Bank will raise its

apital to 10 million dinars (\$14.2 million) in a private

placement to allow it to exand banking services, its eneral manager has said. We have finalised measures write our capital and it has has agreed to raise it by a mate placement with 50 per a from old shareholders and the rest from new invesors." Marwan Awad, genera manager of the Middle East investment Bank, told Reuters. He said the rise in capital to 10 million dinars (\$14.2 million) from four milion dinars (\$5.7 million) would be finalised in two months. It has been approved by an extraordinary general assembly. The bank, one of the Jordan's six investment banks, was given central bank approval last year to engage in commercial banking on completion of raising its capital. He said the bank's operating profits were 100,000 dinars (\$142,857) in 1994, reversing a loss of 146,000 dinars (\$208,571) the previous year. Mr. Awad said both the capital rise and a management restructuring of the bank will allow it to improve its deposit base and return to net profit in 1995. Total assets rose in 1994 to 50 milion dinars (\$71.4 million)

To encourage the public to fly Royal Jordanian, the airline decided on measures by which certain flights will be arranged at prices that could be lower than 50 per cent of the cost of an economy class ticket. These flights, which will be outside the normal schedule, will not Rai).

from 28 million (\$40.0 mil-

lion) in 1993.

The Jordanian and U.S. governments are currently drawing a broad outline for a free trade agreement between the two countries. According to Western diplomatic sources, the agreement, which is expected to be signed in October and will liclude provisions unifying agreement is also experied to remove customs barriers on American goods thering the Kingdom, espedally cars, on condition that

entering Jordan from J across the Jordan V U.S. doe

Cambodia reports heavy army casualties

PHNOM PENH (R) - The Cambodian government Friday said its army had suffered heavy casualties in a drive against Khmer Rouge guerrillas in the far northern province of Preach Vihear.

Asked the number of casualties, a senior government official with a close knowledge of the fighting re-plied: "Too much," He plied: added that an exact casualty figure had still not been re-

ceived in Phnom Penh. "There are casualties and wounded on both sides, but the main problem is that the Khmer Rouge have laid hundreds and hundreds of new mines. There is sporadic

fighting and the problem is the mines," the official, who asked not to be named, told Reuters.

According to an army report just received from the front two key roads going through Preah Vihear province up to the Thai-Cambodian border were "ieopardised by mines" and many areas in the province were "full of mines," said the official.

On Wednesday wounded soldiers evacuated to Phnom Penh said the army had suftered hundreus or casualties in fighting since January, a figure later confirmed by the International Committee for

the Red Cross (ICRC). The ICRC said Thursday it had given emergency aid to

hundreds of Cambodian troops in military hospitals in Phrom Penh and northwest Siem Reap, and more aid distributions were expected next week. "Both hospitals have had a

massive influx of casualties and the majority of them are reportedly from the Preah Vihear area," Urs Boegli, head of the ICRC in Cambodia told Reuters.

The Phnom Penh Hospital was treating more than 450 soldiers and at least 180 had been brought from the north since early January. "With

this number of wounded you can expect an equal or larger number of killed," said Mr. Boegli.

Khmer Rouge radio Friday claimed that 400 government soldiers had been killed in the fighting in which 3,000 troops are involved. Another 700 had died from malaria and 1,200 had deserted from the coalition government's forces, they claimed. Cambodian Co-Defence

Minister Tea Chamrath Thursday said the government army planned to lay siege to the aucient 10th century temple in Preah Vihear, located on the Thai-Cambodian border.

customs fees on products be-tween Jordan and the U.S. Jordanian products exported to the U.S. are given the treatment (Al Du The number of toy

Bridge and Wadi Arab: sing was 43,664 duri August-January peric January peric January peric January peric January peric January peric in Jordan and spent million (Al Aswao

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Barracks in the outskirts of Sarajevo to go to the nearby frontline. Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic

announced yesterday that his forces will smash the government troops if they will launch a new offensive in the Bihac pocket (AFP photo)

Major Herve Gourmelon,

enclave was "not as dramatic

or desperate" as some re-ports had suggested, adding

that "one can speak of mal-

nutritions but not of famine'

His comments, based on

"reliable" information from

U.N. peacekeepers, came a

day after the Geneva-based

office of the U.N.High Com-

missioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) said the pocket's

population - estimated at

around 200,000 — remained

on the verge of a disastrous

And in Rome Thursday,

the World Food Programme

(WFP), the U.N. organisa-

tion in charge of food dis-

tribution, warned that 10 to

20 per cent of the enclave's

population risked starvation.

four-month Bosnia-wide

ceasefire between Bosnian

Serb and government forces

that came into effect on Jan.

1 had been repeatedly

violated in Bihac, and life

was difficult for the enclave's

most yulnerable inhabitants.

critical the (secessionist)

Serbs let an (aid) convoy

A 96-tonne UNHCR con-

voy was unloaded Thursday

in Cazin in the south of the

peacekeepers in the enclave

distributed an additional 15

tonnes of food, he said.

through," he said.

But "when things become

Maj. Gourmelon said the

famine.

Fighting rages in Bihac despite peace efforts and reports of a famine there

raged around the Muslim enclave of Bihac Friday as the major powers tried to get Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to accept a new United Nations peacekeep-

ers reported heavy shelling to the north of the Bibac enclave of northwest Bosnia Thursday and through the night into Friday.

Several hundred mortar detonations were reported around Velika Kladusa on the Croatian border where Serb-backed Muslim rebels of local warlord Fikret Abdic are fighting government troops. Another 35 blasts were heard around Bihac town, the United Nations

Fighting in the U.N.-declared safe area threatens a seven-week-old ceasefire intended to lay the ground for negotiations on the latest international peace plan to end the war in Bosnia and settle conflicts in the former Yugos-

Bosnian Serb forces surrounding the Muslim government 5th Corps in the area accuse their enemies of breaching the ceasefire with a massive push since mid-January. The Sarajevo government counters that Serbs are shelling their forces.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev is due in Belgrade this weekend to present fresh proposals to using his influence over the Bosnian Serbs. Mr. Kozyrev will try to sell

SARAJEVO (R) - Fighting Mr. Milosevic the latest offer from the so-called contact group powers — Russia, the United States, France, Germany and Britain. Under the plan Belgrade would get relief from sanctions crippling rump Yugoslavia's economy in return for recognising Bos-

nia and Croatia. "Everyone, not only us, now sees he (Milosevic) is a key figure who favours a settlement," Mr. Kozyrev said in Moscow after talks with international mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, who were in Belgrade

Wednesday.

"An intensive dialogue is under way. Every party is making a contribution. As far as I can say, we are moving closer to each other," said Mr. Kozyrev, who has argued, against Washington, that Mr. Milosevic must be helped if a peace deal is to

Under the contact group plan Bosnia would be divided into roughly equal parts between the Bosnian Serb side and a Muslim-Croat federation. Croatia would be recognised within its pre-war borders, including the 30 per cent of its territory, the Krajina, now held by Croatian

Accepting such a deal would compel Mr. Milosevic to surrender the nationalist goal of a greater Serbia and leave him open to charges of abandoning ethnic Serbs to nian and Catholic domination in Croatia.

"Milosevic could lose elec-

tions over this." Mihailo Markovic, second in command of the ruling Socialist of the U.N. Protection Force Party, told Reuters. "Many (UNPROFOR), said the situation in the UN-patrolled Serbians would not like it. It

It is also not clear how much leverage the international community has over Mr. Milosevic.

would reduce the Serbs (in

Krajina and Bosnia) to an

endangered minority."

Sanctions are damaging heavy industry but life in Belgrade goes on much as usual. The shops are full of smuggled western goods and petrol is available on any street corner — bought by the bottle from smugglers.

"He (Milosevic) is already criticised for making conces-sions without much benefit." Mr. Markovic said.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, already isolated by his former ally Mr. Milosevic, is in no mood to compromise or talk peace. He has no intention of

embracing the contact group plan which would force his troops to surrender a large chunk of the 70 per cent of Bosnia they have won in three years of bloody battle against the Muslim forces. "If the international com-

munity wants war, there will be war. If it wants peace than it will make peace, but not at our expense," Mr. Karadzic said Thursday.

Meanwhile a U.N. military spokesman said in Sarajevo Bihac are serious, but no one has yet starved to death in the northwest Bosnian pocket

Socialist leader to face trial

French conservatives move closer to all-out presidency war

PARIS (R) - France's rival to all-out war in the presidential election campaign Friday. trading accusations of sabotage and incompetence as polls showed a sharp drop in support for Prime Minister Edouard Balladur.

Former Centrist President Valery Giscard D'Estaing made a stinging attack on Mr. Balladur, the frontrumer for the April-May election, accusing him of weakness and seeking to please rather than

Mr. Balladur and his supporters, worried by the slump in his standing in opinion polls, trained their guins on rivals splitting the conservative vote and accused them of running the suicidal risk of helping the opposition Social-

Three surveys this week said Mr. Balladur's lead over Socialist Lionel Jospin for the April 23 first round was narrowing, although they forecast he would easily win the

May 7 run-off.
"Edouard Balladur, you must choose: Rule or please?" Mr. Giscard d'Estaing wrote in the leftist daily Liberation. "I have not seen any strong government action in what you have presented.' He said Mr. Balladur's

presidential platform, unveiled this week, fell short of the drastic steps needed to curb a budget deficit and near-record 12.6 per cent unemployment. The French people do not

like those who follow rather than lead them... personally I do not intend to go into the year 2000 asleep," Mr. Giscard d'Estaing said, recovering his past presidential tone. He lost the presidency in 1981 to Socialist Francois Mitterrand. His comments could hint at

a rival presidential bid, either his own or that of centrist ex-Prime Minister Raymond Barre who is expected to announce his intentions next



French Prime Minister and presidential candidate Edouard Balladur waves at supporters as leaflets float around him during a campaign rally in the eastern Paris suburb of Nogent-

the candidate Nicolas Sarlozy (right) and Health Minister Simone Veil (2nd right) also attended the meeting (AFP photo) tion Minister Alain Carignon Pasque asked. "Are we to

Mr. Balladur, in his first campaign rally Thursday night, accused rivals of paving the way to a victory for the left. "There are some specialists... who know how to cause defeat," he said.

His barbs, mostly directed at fellow-Gaullist presidential candidate Jacques Chirac, were also a clear warning to potential centrist contenders to stay out of the fight.

His senior supporters unleashed a barrage in all direc-tions. Defence Minister Francois Leotard called on Mr. Chirac to stop suicidal attacks on Mr. Balladur and Social Affairs Minister Simone Veil warned fellow-centrists against joining the election

"I find it saddening that the (centre-right) majority's first casualties in 1981 and 1988 are contributing to the division," Ms. Veil said. "Mr. Mitterrand beat Mr. Chirac and Mr. Barre in

irremediably, incurably the world's most stupid right?" Interior Minister Charles

offer our opponents much longer the show of our divi-

Mr. Chirac, who has ruled out withdrawing despite trailing third in opinion polls, was preparing to fire back in a major campaign speech later Friday.

The left faced problems of its own. The Radical Group said it had not won requeste concessions from the Socialists and might field its leader Jean-Francois Hory as a rival of Mr. Jospin.

In another setback for the Socialist Party, a court ordered its leader Henri Emmanuelli to stand trial on suspicion of illicit party, funding when he was treasur-

Mr. Emmanuelli, who lost the party's presidential nomination to Mr. Jospin, is already due to go to trial next month in a related political corruption case.

The right is also troubled by corruption probes. A court Friday rejected appeal for the release of

who has been held for nearly five months in a graft inquiry. Judicial sources said the court ordered Mr. Emmanuelli and another former Socialist Party treasurer, Andre Laignel, to stand trial on suspicion of illicit party funding. It said they had not personally enriched themselves but that they could not

party was funded. State prosecutors had asked for the case to be dismissed for lack of evidence. Both Mr. Emmanelli and Mr. Laignel, placed under investigation in 1993, have denied the accusations.

be ignorant of the way the

Mr. Emmanuelli's lawyers appealed against the ruling, saying that the court had previously dismissed similar cases involving government

The probe centres on allegations that a consultancy firm accepted donations on behalf of the party from 'milding companies in exnc works tenders in the Mediterranean port city of

India to fence off Kashmir border with Pakistan

dia plans to fence off parts of its border with Pakistan in the northern state of Kahsmir to prevent cross-border arms smuggling by Muslim militants, officials said here Fri-

Engineers will also install floodlights along the zone to help Indian security forces patrol the border in Kashmir, the officials said.

They did not say when the operation would begin, but added that almost 200 kilometres (120 miles) of border territory between the Akhnoor and Paharour sectors would be fenced off at a cost of \$100 million.

The sources said a survey showed that cross-border

rebels was continuing into Indian-held Kashmir, adding that without fencing off the region it would not be possible to close the "loopholes."

Indian security forces have also agreed to increase the number of their frontier posts from the 60 at present to 150, the official sources said here. Kashmir's winter capital.

A line of control stretching 1,000 kilometres (600 miles) demarcates the zones of divided Kashmir, heavily guarded by tens of thousands of troops from both countries on either side of the frontier.

New Delhi, which administers the southern two-thirds of Kashmir, accuses Islamabad of training and arming Muslim guerrillas in the smuggling of weapons by the

Pakistani zone of the Himalayan province.

Pakistan denies the charge saying it only extends moral and diplomatic support to the Muslim secessionist drive, which has left more than 10,000 people dead since 1989 when the rebellion gained momentum.

India fenced off parts of its 850-kilometre (510-mile) border with Pakistan in Punjab when Sikh separatism reached its peak in the northern state in the late 1980s.

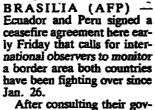
Meanwhile eight Muslim rebels from the powerful pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahedeen group were killed near an Islamic shrine during a gunbattle with Indian troops Friday, a Hizb press statement

Two militant leaders were among the eight killed near the mausoleum of Charsharief, some 37 kilometres (23 miles) from the Srinagare, it said, adding that an unspecified number of security forces had died in the firefight.

Meanwhile, five miltiants were among seven people killed in overnight secessionistlinked violence across the troubled state, the Press Trust of India said Friday.

More than 10,000 people have died in Kashmir since 1989 when Muslim militants stepped up their campaign against Indian rule. India accuses Pakistan of fomenting militancy in Kashmir, its only Muslim-majority state, but Islamabad denies the charge.

Lcuador, Peru sign ceasefire agreement



ernments, Deputy Foreign Ministers Eduardo Ponce, of Peru, and Marcelo Fernandez de Cordoba, of Ecuador, signed the agreement at 0450 GMT at the Brazilian Foreign Ministry at Itamarati Palace, the official statement

The agreement was drawn up earlier this week by Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the United States, all guarantors of a 1942 border treaty that failed to demarcate a 78-kilometre (48-mile) area in the Andes' Condor range.

An observer mission made up of military officials from the four guarantor countries will head to the disputed border area within 48 hours, Brazilian Deputy Foreign Minister Sebastiao du Rego Barros said.

The observer mission will last 90 days but can be extended if needed, the agreement said.

The signing of the Itimar-ary Peace Declaration was preceded by an announce-ment in Lima by Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori that he found the agreement generally "acceptable."

In a joint statement, the guarantor countries said they welcomed the peace accord, stressing that, in it, Quito and Lima had also agreed to bilateral negotiations to find a lasting solution to their border dispute. Ecuador in 1960 unilateral-

ly rejected the 1942 Rio Protocol that ended a war between the two countries. Japan marks month since quake with relief budget

KOBE, Japan (R) - Japan

Friday took the first step in

meeting the daunting cost of

reconstruction after last

month's devastating Kobe

earthquake by hammering

out a special budget for disas-

Prime Minister Tomiichi

Murayama's cabinet en-

dorsed the outline of a sup-

plementary budget totalling

The government estimated

Mr. Murayama has been

ter relief.



in place since Tuesday after

Under the Rio accord, Quito lost almost half its territory and its direct access to the Amazon River, a grievance it has nurtured over the de-

Mr. Fernandez de Cordoba said negotiations to set the border in the disputed area would follow the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement.

The agreement calls for a demilitarised zone in the disputed border zone and a gradual demobilisation of military troops from both countries in all nearby areas. The observer mission,

which Argentinian Foreign

Minister Guido Di Tella said Thursday in Buenos Aires would include 10 military and civilian officials from each guarantor country, will set up headquarters in the areas of greatest friction, such as the border posts of Tiwintza and Base Sur. the accord said. A tentative truce had been Mr. Fuilmori declared a unilateral cessefire and Ecuadorean said its troops would only respond if fired upon. At least 70 Peruvian and Ecuadorean soldiers have

been killed since the border

war began. On Thursday, Ecuadorean President Sixto Duran Ballen said in Quito that clashes continued in the border conflict despite the truce and challenged Lima to accept the four-nation peace plan

immediately. Mr. Fujimori late Thursday said the peace proposal in Brasilia was "acceptable," adding that his government agreed with three key provisions in it and that only "small modifications" were needed. He did not elabo-

Back in Lima after a twoday visit to the disputed border area in the Andes' Condor range, Mr. Fujimon told reporters that the four-nation proposal meant a total ceasefire was in effect in the threeweek conflict.

As peace talks advanced in Brasilia. Peru Thursday released 20 Ecuadorean civilians it had captured since the fighting began, while Ecuador freed 21 Peruvians. Mr. Fujimori Thursday

backtracked on an earlier boast that Peruvian forces had driven all Ecuadorean troops out of what he claimed was Peruvian territory, recapturing from Ecuador posts including Tiwinza.

On Tuesday, reporters and Red Cross representatives toured Tiwinza and said it was still in Ecuadorean

Both countries insisted the other started the latest round of fighting in the unmarked stretch of border at the headquarters of the Cenepa Riv

N. Korea warns U.S. again SEOUL, South Korea (AP) nuclear deal aimed at open-

 In tit-for-tat diplomacy, North Korea warned Friday it is ready to scrap a nuclear deal if Washington continues to try to impose "unjustifiable preconditions."

The warning, in a report by the North's Communist Party organ Rodong Sinmun, indicated the Communist government has no intention of changing its intransigence on the nuclear deal, although U.S. and South Korean officials say this may be a bargaining ploy.

The report said implementation of the accord will only occur on a step-by-ctep basis, with Washington talking the first step. It also rejected dialogue with South Korea as a precondition. 'As we declared more than

once, it is our firm position that if the U.S. does a thing. we will do a thing and if the U.S. does two things, we will do the same," the paper said in a commentary. We have never made an

empty talk. We mean what

we say," said the commen-

tary, carried by the North's

official Korea Central News

Agency (KCNA). North Korea is unhappy with a U.S. plan to provide it with South Korean-made reactors under the Oct. 21 ing up the North's nuclear programme, suspected of

nuclear weapons production. The North cited safety problems for rejecting South Korean-made reactors, but analysts believe the real reason is national pride. Earely this week, the

North, in its strongest lan-

guage yet, threatened to pull

out of the nuclear deal if the United States insists on giving it South Korean reactors. North Korea reportedly prefers a Russian or German model, although analysts say it might be possible to use the South Korean model if it's provided through an in-

termediary. There is no doubt that if the issue of the type of LWRs (light-water reactors) is resolved, other matters will be solved smoothly," Rodong Sinmum said.

Washington maintains the South Korean model is the only viable option for financial reasons. South Korea says it will pay for most of the reactors' \$4 billion costs, but only if its model is adopted. Another hitch is a U.S. demand that the North open dialogue with its southern capitalist rival, as part of the

nuclear deal.

Spain in fresh political turmoil with new arrest

MADRID (R) - Spain faced custody since Judge Garzon fresh political turmoil Friday after a former top security official was remanded in jail on charges of involvement in a secret war against separatist Basque guerrillas in the

Rafael Vera, secretary of state for security in the In-terior Ministry for 11 years, was sent to prison without bail by investigating Judge Baltasar Garzon after fourand-a-half hours of questioning Thursday night.

Mr. Vera is the most senior former official named in the investigation into the antiterrorist liberation group (GAL), which operated on the fringes of Spain's security

The probe shook Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez's minority Socialist govern-ment and Spain's financial markets late last year and in the first weeks of this year. GAL killed 27 alleged Basque separatists in southern France between 1983 and

Before Mr. Vera, four ex-

policemen and security offi-

cials, including Mr. Vera's

already

secretary, had

been remanded in

themselves convicted of GAL crimes in 1991. The political crisis triggered by the case saw financial markets and the peseta nosedive and brought repeated opposition calls for an early general election, but it appeared to have calmed in

reopened the case last De-

cember on the basis of fresh

evidence from two former

Basque region policemen,

Financial markets rebounded on the back of general economic optimism and Mr. Gonzalez emerged a clear points winner from a bruising contest with conservative Popular Party (PP) leader Jose Maria Aznar in last week's state of the nation debate in parliament.

the past two or three weeks.

But news of Mr. Vera's arrest, although widely expected, added fuel to the smouldering fire.

1.02 trillion yen (\$10.2 bil-lion) to finance initial recon-PP spokesman Rodrigo struction costs. Ratio leapt to the attack, Thursday that rebuilding the terming the jailing of the earthquake-hit areas of cenex-security boss "a qualitative jump" in the level of trai Japan would cost at lest suspected official involve-9.6 trillion yen (\$96 billion). ment in GAL.

Severely criticised for the central government's slow response and failure to contain damage from the earthquake. Clearly anxious to dispel

that impression, the budget outline was unveiled a week before the budget bills would be formally submitted to parliament. A Finance Ministry official told reporters the gov-

erament wanted to "relieve victims by letting them know how things are proceeding with reconstruction mea-Sures.

Earlier, parliament approved Mr. Murayama's first concrete measure since the disaster, a package of

The second secon

bills to cancel or cut income taxes and other levies for those who have lost members of their families or homes.

At noon Friday, exactly one month since the killer earthquake razed the port city of Kobe, tens of thousands of people observed a minute of silence. As bells tolled atop the Hyogo Prefectural Hall in

Kobe, workers at reconstruction sites, refugees at evacuation centres and people on the streets stopped and bowed their heads. Police Friday said at least

5,391 people were confirmed

killed by the 7.2 Richter ear-

thquake, which struck at dawn on Jan. 17. Two people were still officially listed as

It was Japan's worst natural disaster since the 1923 great Kanto carthquake, which killed 140,000 in Tokyo and Yokohama.

We have just lost too much," Hyogo Governor Toshitomi Kaihara told a news conference. "I vow to keep stressing the importance

of disaster prevention." "I pray for the souls of all the precious lives that were lost and will now offer a minute's silence together with everyone." Mr. Kaihara said before starting the rite.

By Dr. Musa Keilani

Something 'entirely wrong' with peace process

Thairman of the Board of Directors: THE ISRAELI decision to "ease" its siege of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip was probably was only AMMOUD AL KAYED tangible outcome to Thursday's summit between Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. But if that is MOHAMMAD AMAD touted as a breakthrough in the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations, then there is something seriously wrong in the GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Jordanian Perspective

entire process. For one thing, the very essence of the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles signed in September 1993 is the concept of negotiations to determine the future status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. But it has been made abundantly clear since then that the Israeli perception of those "negotiations" is based on pressuring the Palestinians in all ways possible and force them succumb to whatever Israel dictates in terms of final status.

The Israeli cutoff of gasoline to the Gaza Strip for several days last week and Israel's denial to allow fuel supplies to the Strip from Jordan or from Egypt were the best examples of this mentality.

In any case, given the situation as it is today on the Palestinian ground, one would have expected Arafat and Rabin to agree to bring forward the "final status" negotiations. That would then have been a major breakthrough. But then, the Israeli posture of "full commitment" to the terms of the Declaration of Principles would not have allowed that to happen.

What concerns us in Jordan most is the continuing deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories.

Arafat and Rabin could meet every day or every hour but if those meetings do not produce tangible results in terms of the living conditions of the Palestinian people, then there is little sense in pinning hopes that the peace process, at the direction and pace it is going now, would produce a just solution and bring about an end to the decades-old conflict

From our vantage point the main component in the stalemate in the Israel-PLO track is Rabin's political inability to offer the peace process the right momentum and push that it requires. Rabin is tied down by the political consideration that he could not offer any "concessions" to the Palestinians because such a move would seriously undermine his standing with the electorate and destroy his.

We do understand the political requirements of Rabin to continue in power for some time more if only because of the certainty the situation could only get worse in the event of his Labour Party's rival, Likud, and its leader Benyamin Netanyahu, scoring success in their campaign to topple him and call early elections. But what we do not understand is why the fate of an entire people who have suffered for so many decades simply because that suffering suited the world powers be tied to an individual's or party's political

The crackdown that Arafat has been forced to order against his own people to appease the Israelis is the best example yet of this Israeli "prerequisite". But what is being eroded in the bargain is the political standing of Arafat and the PLO to the detriment of the chances of success of the peace process. This basic contradiction does not seem to be understood or appreciated by Israel, which, given its way, would definitely like to have the PLO chairman assuming the role of Antoine Lahd in the Gaza Strip and acting as a policeman for his own people rather than the leaders of an independent people who yearn for a life in freedom and

All said and done, it is very clear that there is no magic solution to the deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian track except of course an immediate Israeli move to withdraw entirely to the pre-1967 lines with no exception, leaving the Palestinians to handle their own affairs. Israel will have to take the "painful" decision to evacuate the Jewish settlements in the West Bank regardless of the political price that Labour would have to pay for such a move.

Of course, there cannot be an overnight move along those lines. It needs careful planning and approach, but the process has to start sooner than later if Israel wants to put an end to the cycle of violence and extremism that is threatening to undermine everything that has been achieved in the peace process so far. That would mean Israel ought to drop its demands on how the Palestinians should run their affairs and bring forward the final status negotiations. That might be in contradiction of the Declaration of Principles, but then will that be the first time the declaration has been contradicted by the Israelis?

THE EGYPTIAN-sponsored draft treaty to ban all mass destruction weapons in the Middle East, including Iran, was tailored specially to meet Israel's transparent objec-

tion to ratify the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and open the door for a comprehensive Arab endorsement of the proposal to extend the treaty indefinitely. The Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, has repeatedly declared that his country will never renounce its military nuclear capability because of the Iranian and Iraqi nuclear

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The extension of the NPT is up for consideration in April, but some Arab states, notably Egypt and Syria, have vowed not to put their seal of approval on any such extension without Israel's joining the countries already committed to this goal.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid has naturally picked up the Egyptian initiative and made it his own. But what seemed at the outset to be an Arab unifying stance on the NPT ended up becoming a major dividing policy when a meeting of experts of the Cairo-based Arab League failed Wednesday to recommend the endersement of Cairo's position to the upcoming Arab Foreign Ministers' meeting in the Egyptian capital next month.

We believe that the idea of drafting a Middle East regional treaty banning all mass destruction weapons, including nuclear, tiplogical and chemical arsenals, is supportable but may prove to be unworkable for an obvious reason: Israel's rejection of the NPT stems not only from its anxieties about other countries in the area developing or acquiring mass destruction bombs but also because it fears the long-term Arab might and its in numerical edge. Given this reality and the Figet that there is no way that Cairo and other Arab capitals with known nuclear know-how would ever accept to be bound by a treaty that does not bind Israel as well, the parties in this region of the world should look ny elsewhere for ideas to end this standoff than just to the proposed Middle East treaty outlawing all mass destruction weapons.

One way out is to keep at least Egypt, and maybe also other countries non-committal on the NPT and its extension for as long as necessary or basically until the Middle East becomes blessed with a truly comprehensive and just peace that would eliminate the option of war as a method to solve conflicts.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ON THE first anniversary of the Ibrahimi Mosque mas sacre, Arabs and Jews clashed in Hebron, and they are bound to continue clashing as long as they meet and as long as the Israelis occupy Arab land, said Al Ra'i daily. The Jewish settlers, in defiance of Arab feelings and in disregard to their religious sites, are continually provoking the Arabs and, with the help of the Israeli army, are desecrating Muslim shrines, said the paper. The paper said that the Palestinians, who offered so many sacrifices and many martyrs for the sake of securing freedom and ending the Israeli occupation, are ready to continue the struggle and this was their message to the world and to the Israeli leadership on the first anniversary of the massacre. As long as Israel continues to delay the implementation of its agreements with the Palestinian leadership, the Palestinian lands are bound to witness further acts of violence and bloodshed, continued the daily. It said that the way for preventing friction is a total separation between Arabs and Jews and an end to Jewish settlement programmes on Arab

IBRAHIM ZAROUR, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that Israel is the only Middle Eastern state that possesses nuclear weapons in addition to the other mass destruction weggens. Had it not been for America's continued economic, financial and other kinds of help, the Jewish state could never have possessed this horrible arsenal, which the Zionists use to threaten the Arab Nation, said the writer. It is natural then for the Arabs to feel insecure and for Egypt to demand that Israel sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and open its nuclear installations to international inspection, said the writer. Washington is trying to belittle the concern raised by Cairo over this issue and is claiming that the Cairo-Tel Aviv dispute is a matter of difference of opinion, which the two sides would soon overcome, he added. But, he said, Egypt realises too well the grave danger inherent in Israel's arsenal and is determined to spearhead Arab efforts to see that the Israeli nuclear power is checked.



Arabs should have a unified stand against Israel's nuclear threat

By Elia Nasrallah

THE LOCAL Arabic dailies last week discussed Israel's nuclear capabilities and their threat to the Arab Nation, the deadlock in the Middle East peace process on the Israel-Palestine track and a host of domes-

In discussing Israel's nuclear power, a columnist in Al Dustour daily said that the current Arab efforts to force Israel to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is not only an Egyptian undertaking but rather a pan-Arab endeavour to ensure pan-Arab security. The Arab countries are due to discuss the issue at the Arab League level in the coming month and it is then that they will show whether they are united on this issue or whether they are in disarray in the face of Israel's threats, said Taher Al Adwan. The writer said that the United States. which continually supports. the Israeli stand, was bound to exercise pressure on the Arabs to accept a compromise settlement which would not end the Israeli threat to the Arabs.

He said that the Arabs should not accept a kind of peace imposed by the threat of nuclear weapons. Mohammad Kharroub, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily,

voiced his regret that the Arab countries have not yet reached a consensus on how to deal with the Israeli nuclear threat, largely due to inter-Arab differences. Israel does not want to open its nuclear installation to international inspection and it pursues efforts to build its nuclear arsenal. said the writer. Israel's refusal to sign the NPT, said the writer, gives rise to Arab fears that the Jewish state is determined to impose a settlement on the Arab Nation through the power of nuclear weapons and with backing from the United States. It is regrettable, said the writer, that the Arabs remain in disarray in the face of the common threat that is posed to their present and

Tareq Masarweh, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, criticised the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christother for demanding that the Arabs and not Israei should sign the NPT in April. The writer said that the United States, which is keen on protecting the Jewish state, does not care whether the Israelis

threaten the Arabs with

nuclear weapons or not as

long as Tel Aviv possess

future.

the means to protect itself. Sultan Al Hattab, a columnist in Al Ra'i, called on the Arab masses to protest against Israel's continued acts of repression on the Palestinian people. The writer said that protests can be made through the Israeli embassies in Amman and Cairo and can be presented at the official and popular levels. We should not bury our heads in the sand and pretend that nothing is hap-pening in Israeli-held Arab lands, where our kinsmen

are facing untold suffer-

ings, said the writer. It is

regrettable, he said. that

not one Arab regime has yet protested to Israel over

its inhuman treatment of

Palestinian people under its

His call was echoed by

the daily Al Aswaq, which

said that the first

anniversary of the massacre

committed by the Zionists

against the worshippers in

Hebron stands out as a

reminder of the extend of

danger and continued rep-

ression practices by Israel

on the Arab people. The

paper said that the Palesti-

nian people await help

from the Arab Nation and

aspire to regain their legiti-

mate rights. The paper said

that the only means for

ending the acts of violence

and the Palestinian ordeal

is through forcing the

Israelis to comply with the

requirements of peace and

the implementation of the

Oslo and Cairo agree-

Mohammad Kawash said

ments.

occupation.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

in Al Dustour that negotiations with the Israelis do not help to secure the withdrawal of occupation forces from Arab lands if they are not backed by resistance activities. The writer said that Israel does not wish to withdraw from Arab land and nice words would not force it to pull out its forces. He said that the Palestine National Authority (PNA) should use the resistance and encourage resistance activity as a way for forcing Israel to accept and comply with the requirements of peace.

Mohammad Mahasneh, a writer in Al Dustour, commented on the Arab-Israeli-American meeting in Washington, saying the meeting was a failure because it could not force the Israelis to comply with the peace requirements. The Palestinian-Israeli track has been derailed due to Israel's fears of the selfrule, which is bound to extend to other Palestinian lands and deprive the Jew-

ish state of continued

occupation, said the writer.

The implementation of

peace would mean a halt in

Israeli settlement construc-

tion and curtailing of

Israel's power, something

which is feared by the set-

tlers and the Israeli govern-

ment, he added. The writer

said since its inception, the

PNA has been facing obsta-

cles created by the Israeli government, which is in-tent on maintaining its

A columnist in Al Dus-

tour, said that the govern-

ment's moves to deal with

public share holding com-

panies or semi-official

organisations came too

late. The government deci-

sion is an open admission that the failure of these

firms resulted from mis-

management and the in-

competence of officials,

said Mohammad Daoud.

The writer said it would be

a wise step on the part of

the government if it pub-

holds on Arab lands.

lished the names of those responsible for the firms failure, and had them account for their actions. Since members of the board of directors receive payment in return for their efforts when their companies achieve success, he added, these board members ought to be made to account for their actions in case of failure.

In discussing the carnage

on the roads as a result of

road accidents, Mohammad Kawash, a writer in Al Dustour, said that increasing penalties on violators of traffic rules might not deter motorists from speeding or reckless driving. The writter said that the spreading of awareness among the public against speeding for instance, should be stepped up not only through the media but rather through the schools and the local communities. The latest increases in the number of road accidents reflect the fact that all measures which have been taken to curtail accidents have gone in vain and, said the writer, the time has come for the concerned authorities to try their hand at a different approach. George Haddad, a col-

umnist in Al Dustour, said it has become clear to all Arabs and the world at large that it is the Americans who insist on maintaining the embargo on Iraq. Despite the implementation of all U.N. resolutions, the Iraqis are still under siege because the United States wants to peddle its weapons and sell its arms to the Gulf states, which Washington continue to warn against Baghdad's imaginary threat, said the writer. It is regrettable, he said, to hear the Arab League Secretary General announcing that pan-Arab reconciliation and an end to Iraq's plight could only come through Baghdad's compliance with U.N. resolutions. The writer said that such statement reaffirms the fact that the Arab League has now deterioted to the lowest level and can by no means be counted on to handle any Arab issue.

Gulf states frustrated but may sign NPT

By Ashraf Fouad

DUBAI — Unwilling to give regional rivals Iran and Iraq pretexts to stay out of a global nuclear non-proliferation pact, Saudiled Gulf Arabs may be per-suaded to sign it despite their anger at Israel's refus-

al to do so. Arab and Western political analysts also said the six nations of the Gulf Cooperation. Council (GCC) were reluctant to cross the United States, which rusbed to their de-

fence after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Washington is pushing its allies hard to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) when it comes up for renewal in April. But Arabs are dismayed that this pressure does not appear to include Israel. which has never signed the treaty. Israel is widely believed to have about 200 nuclear warbeads, the only country in the Middle East

to have a nuclear arsenal. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres insisted on Monday the Jewish state would not sign the treaty despite a sharp exchange with Egypt over the issue at a meeting of Arab-Israeli foreign ministers in Washington on Sunday.

The analysts said Gulf Arab states supported Egypt's campaign to persuade Israel to sign the treaty and resented the U.S. pressure on them as evidence of double standards that gave Israel the benefit of the doubt in the Middle

But they have so far stopped short of joining Cairo's demand that Arabs should make their signature conditional on Israel's accession to the treaty.

"GCC frustration with Israel putting itself forward as a special case is understood... but they have a different set of considerations than Egypt," said one Western diplomat.

"I'll be surprised if the GCC gives a definite 'no' to NPT," he said. "I don't think we are at a make-or-

break point. There is a lot at stake."

"The logic of the argument on Israel is 100 per cent right and there is clear (U.S.) double standards. But, all things considered, I think the Gulf (Arab) states will sign (the NPT)," said

an Arab analyst.
The United States has been trying to persuade the GCC that it should follow Iran, Gulf-based diplomats

"The GCC should take the moral high ground and not hold hostage a treaty of great impact on global peace. Iran is being fairly shrewd about this (NPT issue)," one Western diplomat said, reiterating Washington's argument.

Tehran has said it will

remain an NPT signatory despite the treaty's flaws because it does not wish to be in the same camp as Gulf Arabs have express-

ed concern about Iran's nuclear programme, which Washington says could develop a nuclear weapon in a few years. Iran insists its nuclear programme is peaceful.

"I think GCC states look more towards Iran. By not signing, they could give Iran a pretext to do the same, something they do not want," said the Arab analyst.

The military machine of Iraq, including its nuclear arms programme, has been largely dismantled in line with 1991 Gulf war ceasefire resolutions, though some Western military experts say Baghdad can revive it if U.N. monitoring of its weapons programmes

are loosened. Iraq, once the Guif's other main power, is also an NPT signatory, but it urged fellow Arab countries last month not to sign the treaty unless Israel did.

The GCC, Egypt and Syria, in the context of their four-vear-old economic and political alliance, the Damascus declaration, took a united stand earlier this month against international tolerance of Israel's refusal to sign the NPT.

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LETTERS

Damaging comments

To the Editor:

I WOULD like to respond Hussam Dermieh's letter to the editor (Why people write letters, Jordan Times, Feb. 15). Since the writer took notice of two letters to the editor on two occasions, I would assume that he, like many Jorda-

nians, reads the Times frequently.

The students of Jordanian universities could be offended, and rightly so, if we label all of them as non-readers' of the Jordan Times. As for the public relations officers of our government, it would be such a pity if they do not bother to notice readers' comments in your paper. What happens when one of our "guests" sends in a

comment? Does it go unnoticed? Suggesting that we avoid talking about our problems in an English daily will not make such problems disappear, but will give the impression that we are indifferent to these problems and, for instance, think that it is okay to stare and make remarks at passers-by. Staring, incidentally, is not a secret we can keep from our guests; they experience it on a

The writers' comments themselves are damaging to our image. He is requesting all Jordanians to refrain from writing about any negative side of our society in the Jordan Times and reserve such comments to Arabic dailies. All this in an open letter to the editor of the Jordan Times for all our "guests" to read!

Issam J. Rihani.



A GUNMAN yelled from

behind the silhouette of his

raised Kalashinkov assault rifle outside the floodlit house in south Mogadishu.

"Go back, go back, go back! Nobody is to come

here!" he shouted, his gun

trained on our car's windscreen. People milled in the shadows. There were no

faces, only the forms

thrown out by the lights

perched on a wall strung

with razor wire and broken

This was the headquar-

ters of Osman Ato in Moga-dishu last week. Until De-

cember Mr. Ato was the

main financial backer and clan ally of faction leader

General Mohammad Farah

Aideed. Now they are fight-

ing each other and the ten-

sion rises every day as Somalia prepares for the United Nations' pull-out

and the murderous chaos

A car escorted by a truck with a mounted machinegun broadcast Mr.

Ato's message that nobody should confront the esti-mated 8,000 American

troops due eto land this month to protect the withdrawing United Nations

forces. Two hours earlier, a

different car had broadcast Gen. Aideed's opposing

at and two people died. The

rival messages are the out-

ward sign of preparation for conflict which has split the Habergidir clan at a time

when unity is most needed.

Ato is hoping to save his own. Gen. Aideed has not

been seen in public for months, while Mr. Ato is

limping around Mogadishu

on crutches after a land-

mine blew away half his

foot and took a chunk out

row yesterday, Mr. Ato

said after a meeting with Gen. Aideed. "He has to

give in. He wants to be

president and prime minis-

ter, but he can't be. I be-

"We had a very heated

of the other.

and power base.

Gen. Aideed is fighting for his political life. Mr.

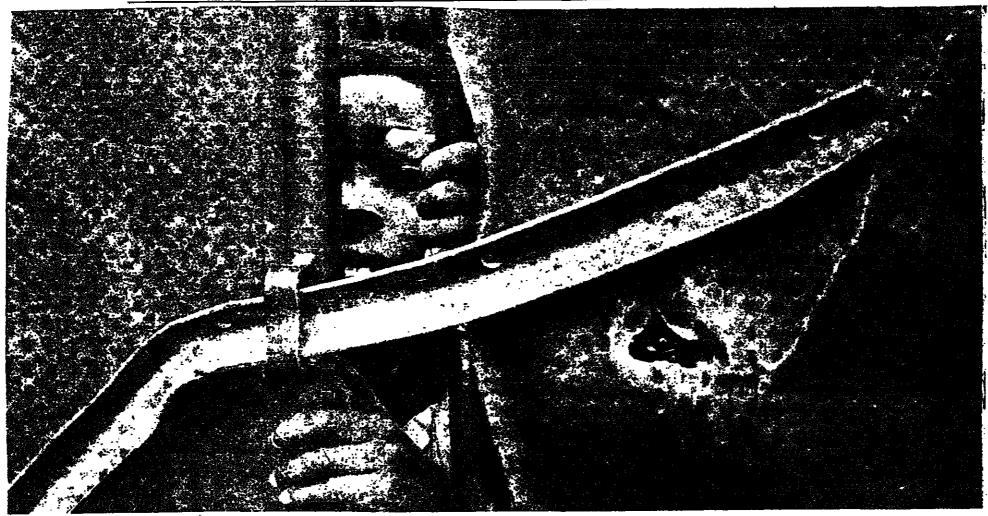
ge. The car was shot

that looms in its wake.

glass set in concrete.

Somalia braced for new dark age

Mark Huband hears a 'moderate' say US peacekeeping 'bastards' don't have to be shot — then see s a local have to limbs cut off



Eye of the storm: The withdrawal of UN forces next month is clearing the way for a showdown as Somali factions take advantage of a diplomatic disaster

those (American) bas-

Mr. Ato is planning to sue the U.S. government for the ill treatment he received in 1993 when the U.S. declared war on Gen. Aideed and his followers. "But Aideed has become so hard that he may find that everybody has abandoned

lieve that he is walking in Throughout the city the the middle of darkness, newly aligned and newly even among his own people split clans and sub-clans plot and counter-plot over who will be president when the U.N. leaves for good. We don't want anyone to bother the Americans, The timetable for the deeven though we have some parture has been kept exdifferences and disputes tremely vague. While the with them, but that doesn't U.N. mandate officially mean we have to shoot

ends on March, 31, the Americans said on Friday that they hope to be out during the first week of the montă.

All U.N. civilians are now bunkered down at Mogadishu airport, having moved from the former American embassy compound 12 days ago. The compound was looted within minutes of their departure by gunmen who had comped outside overnight before the U.N. left.

The U.N. civilians were due to leave Mogadishu by Tuesday. The American troops, their helicopters and AC-130 bombing and surveillance planes flying

overhead, arrived by overcraft on Mogadishu missions all last week.

The troops will take over the port on Feb. 27 to provide a 'united shield' as the Pakistani, Malaysian, Bangladeshi and other U.N. troops leave.

The anti-shark net, which was strung beneath the waves just off the coast to allow U.N. employees to swim in peace, has already been removed so that U.S. amphibious craft can land. Thousands of tonnes of equipment now in the port is being removed as quickly as possible, to avoid it falling into the hands of the gunmen responsible for the

biggest diaster in U.N. his-

Perhaps nothing now could reunite the Habergidir leadership except war against their common enemy — the Abgal clan of north Mogadishu. But now men such as General Mohammad Nur Galai, who is emerging as leader of Gen. Aideed's fighters. are making extensive con-tacts with the Abgal clan and its leader, Ali Mahdi Monammad, in a bid to

avert civil war. Gen. Galal is short. smartly dressed, with greying hair and a friendly manner, and says: "When Aideed sees the Habergidir

splitting, he always creates In the past the Habergidir have always been willing to follow him. But there have been many casualties. Most-of the Habergidir are ready

to reconcile with the other

After five years of civil war, Gen. Aideed's men, patrolling in their gunmounted Toyota Land Cruisers, are as beleaguered as the city of rub-ble, bullet-riddled villas and sand-clogged streets.

Gunmen at Gen. Aideed's checkpoints take money from passing cars. In previous years they had plenty of monety; now they

courtyard teems with his gunmen. "We are not ideologists. There's nothing for nothing. Politics isn't holy. It's interests. When we are in politics we are salesmen. We sell the politics to people. And every Ali Mahdi must accept Gen. Aideed as president

Mogadishu hotel whose

and himself as vicepresident. If he refuses, or forms his own government, then there will be fighting. 'We will attack to elimin

ate," he said.
The U.N. Somalia having spent \$2.5b. Its mission has been a qualified success on a humanitarian front, its military mission a failure and its political aim of bringing law, order and government back to Soma-lia a complete disaster.

The departure is a race against time to a certain extent. It's unprecedented for a U.N. operation to be functioning but also pack-ing up," said George Ben-nett, the UNOSOM

Private contractors working for the U.N. are feeling leave. The U.N.'s Australian caterers, Morris Supplies, which had a \$100m contract to feed the troops and civilians, reckons the U.N. will owe it \$20m in unpaid bills by the end of the month.

The company claims it does not have the money to pay off its workers, but its Somali employees and local traders to which it owes money will not let them go.

"Before they kill us, one of us will get kidnaped. That's the way they operate. There's no way if we backed now that we would make it to the airport. We owe too much money to leave here alive, and we have told the U.N. that," said Morris's managing director, Robert McVicker, who has a private army which will guard him until

the bills are paid. Back on the streets, the militias will be extorting, threatening and killing to survive, plunging the country once more under the rule of the gun, as the world closes its eyes on what Somalia is to become.

The Observer

King guest of honour at summit ____

(Continued from page 1)

March 6 to 12. In less than a fortnight two major crises in the diplomatic field deriving partly from the upcoming summit have embarrassed the Danish gov-

A visit by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmood Vaezi, who, due to the fatwa issued against British author Salman Rushdie, was denied entry to neighbouring Norway and Sweden, aroused harsh attacks in both the parliament and the majority of

Many critics accused the government of neglecting insistence on human rights in order to protect the Danish

last year amounted to 28,000 tonnes to Iran.

Observers assessed that the government deemed a noncommittal conduct necessary in view of its impending role as host of several other foreign government representatives from countries being accused of flagrant violations of the world charter on human

Hardly had the Iranian visitor departed for Paris from Copenhagen airport before a journalist arriving from Accra at the very same airport forced the Danish government into swift action to prevent impending accusations of racism.

Neglecting a fully valid visa the passport police denied entry for the Ghanaian reporter as he did not bring with him an invitation to visit Denmark issued by the Foreign Ministry so he could make arrangements for his cover-

age of the social summit.

The incident prompted both the development and the foreign ministers to publish annoyed comments and issue strict instructions for the passport authorities to demonstrate considerably higher standards of conduit and flexibility. This, the ministers stressed, will be imperative when the massive influx of more than 20,000 both official and nongovernmental representatives joined by an estimated 5,000 media people from all over the world head for Copenhagen in the days to

Ekeus to probe

"That's a big discount, which explains why many of us are willing to take risks to move that oil," an unnamed

Using the clandestine network, Iraq is exporting about 200,000 barrels a day, the

States has been the leader in tions against Iraq are enforced. "Embargoes or sanctions are seldom perfect, and leakage," he said. "We're looking into this particular report. If accurate, we would certainly want to take steps with respect to that leakage Iragis, how important those

resolutions provide an opportunity for the Iragis to sell their oil and use the proceeds for humanitarian purposes. "They've-been unwilling to do that, which can only mean to us that if they sell their oil they probably want to use the funds they get for weapons

White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry confirmed the report that Iraq is selling oil in violation of United Nations sanctions, but in quantities far below those cited. "Our own experts estimate" the leakage is 80,000 to 100,000 barrels a day rather than 200,000 barrels.

Opposition says Iran trains

TEL AVIV (AP) - Iran is training Kamikaze pilots to attack Israel and plans to send spies masquerading as immigrants to the Jewish state, an exiled Iranian

interview published Friday.

"I think that Israel has an

what he said were reliable sources in Iran who told him the government was training suicide pilots for missions to Israel. He said the pilots were

"According to the report. four pilots have completed the course and have already left Iran in order to get ready for the mission," Mr. Ganji told Yedioth Ahronoth.

Mr. Ganji also said that Iran is planning to send agents to Israel. "They will go undercover as Jewish immigrants, apparently from Syria, but this is not definite," hew said.

The director general of Israel's defence ministry, DAvid Ivri, warned in an interview Friday that Iran was buying sophisticated war planes and long-range mis-siles that could reach Israel.

The Iranian threat is not an immediate one, but if we do we are liable to find ourselves without a satisfactory way to Ivri told the daily Davar. Amid U.S. pressure to isolate Iran, the country's supreme leader warned Friday that the Iranian nation would not buckle, Tehran Radio re-

are raising funds. At a

checkpoint on the port road

a gunman trained his Kalashnikov at the head of a taxi driver, took 500 Somali shillings from him,

lowered the gun and then handed the driver a receipt

before waving him on.
To avoid his eclipse,

Gen. Aideed has secured

the support of Mohammad

Kanyare Afrah — who de

fected from Ali Mahdi last

September and is now his.

closest military ally.

The question is: Who

will be in the top seat.

Which clan and which per-

son?" said Mr. Farah, who

is now based in a few dark

and sweltering rooms at a

ported.
"I state here in the presence of multitudes of worshipers, on behalf of every individual of the nation, that the enemies of Islam can never bring the Iranian na-tion to its knees," Ayatoliah Ali Khamenei said in a sermon at Tehran University.

He said last week's massive turnout at a rally in Tehran to mark the 16th anniversary of Iran's Islamic revolution proved to Iran's enemies that their efforts to weaken the clerical Muslim establishment were doomed to failure.

"The Americans are plotting with every government they can to bring pressure on the Iranian nation, to force the Iranian government to surrender," he said in the sermon aired on Tehran Radio, monitored in Cyprus.

The United States, which identifies Iran as a "rogue state" for allegedly sponsor-ing international "terrorism," has sought to persuade Tehran's trader partners to downgrade their commercial activities with the Iranians.

Washington, which alleges Iran is involved in a covert nuclear weapons programme, also has been trying to dissuade Russia from selling nuclear reactors to the Iranians. But Russia said this week it would go ahead with the sale.

Iranian officials say Washington has no evidence for its allegations against Iran, but is angered at Iranian opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace plan.

Tehran Radio said the United States was like "a giant in the service of Zionism." Clinton administration officials are encouraged that a strenuous lobbying effort has thus far headed off

approval by Japan of the \$450 million loan to Iran. The administration has given high priority to isolating Iran but has had difficulty winning broad international support. Germany maintains close ties with Iran and a Russian agreement to provide nuclear reactors and training to Iran is a sore point in U.S. relations with Mos-

U.S. officials have pushed hard — thus far successfully - to persuade Japan not to go ahead with the loan, which is the second installment on a power project said to be worth \$1.5 billion. Japan says the loan request is still alive.

"The U.S. government is expressing its concerns, and we take into consideration what they say," said Hiroshi Hashimoto, an official at the Japanese embassy Washington.

He noted that the proposed loan would not be earmarked for the Iranian government, but for the Iranian firms carrying out the project in the southern part of the country.

In response to statements by U.S. officials that Japan has deferred a decision, Mr. Hashimoto said: "There is no set period as to when we should decide."

He acknowledged there is a fundamental difference in the way Japan and the United States perceive Iran.

"We believe it is very dangerous to isolate Iran,

Jordan Times Tel: 667171

export of feta cheese which

Arafat rejects 'Jenin-first' offer (Continued from page 1)

During the symposium, en-After the Peace, What Future?," guests - including

former U.S. Secretary of titled "The Mediterranean State Henry Kissinger and other past and present government ministers from va-

means to hint that Egypt is

going in a direction hostile to

Israel. I feel sorry for this .. I

wish Rabin will be more

accurate rather than compli-

cating relations between us,

Mr. Mubarak said in Cairo.

frankly that we would like

Israel to sign the NPT be-

cause Israel is just on our

borders ... any leakage or anything that happens

threatens the national secur-

ity of this country," the presi-

"I am not speaking about the Arab World. I am speak-

ing about Egypt. It is inse-

cure to have all these nuclear

weapons in Israel without any

Mr. Mubarak denied

inspection from the interna-

allegations made by Mr.

Rabin to parliament that

Egypt tried to influence Afri-

can states, including Tanza-

_nia, Djibouti and Comoros,

tional community."

dent said

"I could tell you very

tus of Jerusalem and economic prospects for the region.

Juppe warns Egypt in NPT row

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Mubarak has insisted that Egypt would only sign the extension of the NPT, if Israel did the same. But Israel has refused, cit-

ing its special "security" concerns, and has never confirmed Western reports that it possesses about 200 nuclear warheads. Mr. Musa reasserted

Thursday in Bonn, after talks with German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, that his government could not commit itself to a prolongation of the NPT unless Israel also signed the treaty.

Israel insists it will not sign the treaty until it is satisfied that countries will not sign the treaty until it is satisfied that countries like Iran, Iraq and Libya do not pose a

'Mr. Rabin wants by all

reported Friday that the United States had demanded that Israel take "unilateral steps" to avoid a full-blown

Algerian

The Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most radical of the factions fighting the military-backed regime, and AIS, the armed wing of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), have threatened more suicide attacks. On Jan.

attack. Meanwhile, the government is continuing with prethe end of the year.

not to establish ties with Israel.

rious countries — will discuss

topics such as the future sta-

crisis with Egypt. sanctions are.

(Continued from page 12)

30, a suicide bombing in cen-tral Algiers killed 42 people and injured 286. The GIS claimed responsibility for the

parations for presidential elections to be held before

(Continued from page 12) of \$14 a barrel for similar Middle Eastern oil, the paper

London-based trader told the

The United Nations allows Iraq to export just 75,000 barrels a day to Jordan, to cover Iraqi costs for the purchase of medicine and food. The country had been exporting 2.5 million barrels a day before the Gulf war, for revenues of \$12.7 billion a

Times said.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Thursday the State Department is looking into the New York Times story.
He pointed out the United

trying to ensure that the sancthere unfortunately is almost always a certain amount of But the important thing overall is to understand how much pressure we have put on the

He noted that the U.N. purchases or some other deleterious purpose," Mr. Christopher said.

kamikaze pilots against Israel respond in the future," Mr. wanted-dead list, quoted

opposition figure said in an trained in secret camps.

Manouchehr Ganji said he chose to talk to the Yedioth Ahronoth daily because he wanted ot win support in Israel for Iranian expatriates seeking to topple Iran's Shiite Muslim fundamentalist rul-

interest in helping the Iranian opposition topple the government of terror," said Mr. Ganji, who lives in Paris and heads a small group called the Organisation for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Iran.

Mr. Ganji, a former Iranian education minister, said he was looking for help in building a shortwave radio station to broadcast from Mr. Ganji, who claims he

France to Iran. is number one on Iran's

Russians, Chechens extend truce

(Continued from page 1)

by the people," he said. Chechen cleric Muhamed Alsabekov said meanwhile Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin intends to order a halt in fighting in Chechenya until March 5, the end of the Holy Month of

The mufti said Mr. Chernomyrdin had made the undertaking in a meeting with Chechen spiritual leaders Wednesday. Mr. Alsabekov said the

Muslim clerics would also try to stop military operations on the Chechen side. The Chechen people would never "oppose the clergymen," he said, quoted by the news agency Interfax. A Russian parliamentary

COMMISSION SET UP to assess the Chechen conflict has summoned senior political and military leaders for a hearing Monday.

Among those summoned by the commission are Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev, the architect of the intervention in Chechenya that started on Dec. 11, former Russian Deputy President Alexander Rutskoi, and former Parliamentary Speaker Rusian Khasbulatov, a leader of Chechen opposi-

Also called to appear were Salambek Khadzhiyev, the former Soviet petrochemicals minister Moscow wants to put at the head of a new Chechen government, Nationalities Minister Sergei Shakhrai, and former Prime

Yemen grapples | U.S. posts worst merchandise trade deficit with inflation, budget deficit

suffering from raging infla-tion and the government is resorting to printing money to fund its budget deficit, Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Wahab Ali Al Ansi

The situation has reached the stage where the state's job has become one of producing money... it has become a money producer, Mr. Ansi told a news confer-

ence Thursday.
Mr. Ansi said the start of economic reform in Yemen, one of the most impoverished Arab countries, "is to cut down the budget deficit by finding new resources for the state.

He declined to disclose the deficit. Yemen had no budget 3E for 1993 and 1994 because of e political instability which led to a two-month civil war be-'ra tween north and south last ree year. The 1995 budget has on not yet been presented to ne parliament.

Unemployment is running um at 30 per cent of the estiuid mated workforce of four mil-

This week Yemen in-INcreased prices of stateed controlled food by between 1 221 and 196 per cent. Prices e of some foods are soaring on nys the black market. Yemenis Hisay locally produced vegetm, ables, meat and eggs have 1 risen by 60 to 100 per cent in Threcent weeks.

eci The price of imported ol goods has shot up as Yemen's in currency continues to lose

y value. zii An official newspaper said cle last Sunday that authorities Sighad arrested wholesalers to VI-stop prices from spiralling

Mr. Ansi declined to disclose figures on inflation which economists and diplomats said ranges from 60 to 100 per cent.

The government has held talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, but diplomats said it did not seem to be acting on their recommendations

The IMF was reported to have recommended unifying the two-tier exchange rate to 50-55 riyals per dollar, re-placing an official rate of 12 riyals and a central banksanctioned free rate of 84 riyals. The riyal trades at about 110-120 to the dollar on the illegal black market.

Mr. Ansi said reforms would require tightening expenditures, controlling revenues, allowing the private sector more freedom and tackling the problem of sub-

He said Yemen spends \$400 million annually to subsidise wheat and flour. Mr. Ansi said the official price of wheat and flour was about one tenth of the real value. The state recently raised prices of these staples by 36

per cent and 25 per cent respectively but residents said there were shortages and that the black market price was 200 to 300 per cent high-

"To start with, subsidies is a wrong policy. It encourages corruption," Mr. Ansi said. He hinted that Yemen might increase the price of petrol and gas. The price of a small bottle of mineral water is three times that of one litre

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States posted its

biggest merchandise trade deficit in history last year as a surge in imports swamped a record level of exports, the Commerce Department reported Friday.

The deficit soared by 25.4 per cent last year to \$166.29. billion, compared to a 1993 shortfall of \$132.58 billion.

President Clinton has cited big market-opening deals as one of his major achievements since taking office, but the new figures demonstrated the challenges the United States faces in the global eco-

nomy.
Deficits with Japan and China both set records last year. The Japanese imba-lance climbed 11 per cent to \$65.7 billion while the trade gap with China surged at an even faster rate of 30 per cent

to \$29.5 billion. These figures count only trade in merchandise. If services are also included, the 1994 trade imbalance totals \$108.11 billion, 43 per cent higher than a \$75.73 billion goods and services deficit in 1993.

In a glimmer of hope, the deficit in merchandise and services narrowed in December to \$7.34 billion, the smallest monthly deficit in nine

Many economists believe U.S. trade fortunes will improve this year as growing economies overseas boost U.S. exports while America's growth rate slows, thus cutting demand for foreign

However, they concede that the recent economic troubles in Mexico, which is America's third largest export market, will dampen whatever improvements occur as the weaker peso makes U.S. exports more expensive in Mexico while making Mexican goods cheaper in

this country.

Even before December's steep plunge in the peso, the U.S. surplus with Mexico was shrinking. For the year, the surplus totalled \$1.34 billion,

down 19 per cent from 1993 and an even steeper drop from 1992 when the United States had enjoyed a \$5.8 billion surplus with Mexico. The lower surplus in 1994 occurred even though U.S. exports to Mexico climbed by 22.3 per cent. This gain was

offset by a 24 per cent rise in

Mexican imports.

Opponents of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which is eliminating trade barriers among the United States, Mexico and Canada, have predicted that America's surplus with Mexico will vanish altogether this year because of the plunge in the value of the peso.

chandise deficit for last year surpassed the 1987 record for goods on a balance of payments basis of \$159.6 billion.

The combined deficit of \$108.11 billion in merchandise and services was the largest imbalance since a record \$114.8 billion deficit recorded in 1988.

The goods and services figure was aided by the fact that U.S. exports of services such as travel and consulting fees climbed to an all-time high of \$58.2 billion, helping to offset somewhat the merchandise deficit.

For the year, exports of

per cent to an all-time high of \$502.80 billion. However, foreign imports of merchandise climbed an even faster 13.5 per cent to \$669.09 billion, also a record level.

The trade figures would have looked even worse if oil prices had not fallen in 1994. The average prices per barrel was \$14.22, the lowest since 1988. Even with the price decline, America's foreign oil bill rose to \$60.54 billion, up 5.9 per cent from 1993, as the volume of shipments rose.

Imports of autos and auto parts, another big factor in America's chronic deficits. merchandise climbed 10.1 \$118.64 billion last year.

Mark allure irresistable despite headaches at home

FRANKFURT (R) — The German mark jetted higher Friday, unaffected by the threat of a massive engineering strike, as investors across the world clamoured for sanctuary from tumult elsewhere, senior currency deal-

"Internal German issues and interest rates and external interest rates are totally irrelevant at the moment. People are just getting out of everything if it's not marks and into marks," said Victor von Klemperer, the head of foreign exchange at Dresdner Bank A.G. in Frankfurt.

begun, others say it's over-"There's no end in sight," said Michael Burkhart, foreign exchange manager at Helaba in Frankfurt. "Dollar/mark could go to 1.46, mark/lira to 1,100 —

Some say the move has just

anything's possible."
The dollar fell to a low of 1.4768 marks in Friday morning, hitting its weakest level since October 1992, and the lira was bid at a record low 1,086.75 to the mark.

If anything, immediate domestic factors - other than the prospect of higher interest rates down the road — might suggest a weaker mark short-term, the dealers said. But no one is looking at

such factors. The mark has soared some two per cent against the lira and sterling in the past six trading sessions, and has jumped some four per cent against the dollar.

It has jumped even though Germany's powerful engineering union I.G. Metall has threatened a strike before month's end to back its demands for a six per cent wage

But the prospect of a widespread strike, and its potential to choke economic recovery, would likely weigh on the mark if anyone were paying attention to it, said

Reto Feller, chief spot dealer at Commerzbank

One theory making the rounds in the market suggests the opposite - that an inflationary package would persuade the Bundesbank to push rates higher sooner

rather than later. Few here believe, however, that the union has the clout to drive through an inflationary wage deal or that employers have any reason to rush into an expensive accord. Many see a three per

cent rise. Dealers in Frankfurt largely dismissed this speculation linked to interest rates as

"That's silly," Mr. Feller said. The mark is up because "people still trust the mark." Indicating that the rush to marks was simply safe haven buying, he added: "You can see that in the stability of the

Swiss franc." The franc, another traditional harbour in times of

market stress, has been holdng its own against the mark. The market is also paying no heed to a regional election on Sunday in the German state of Hesse.

"Ninety-five per cent of traders worldwide don't know its happening," Mr.

Von Kiemperer said. The recent European foreign-exchange agonies were kicked off in Britain amid Conservative Party bickering over the future of Europe that undermined sterling. The tumult spread like wildfire to encompass the

currencies of Spain, Portugal and Italy. Some experts said the mark's gains had been over-done. The head of foreign exchange at a top German foreign exchange bank said, "It's exaggerated. There's no reason for the mark to be higher in Europe." Commerzbank's Feller agreed,

France slams Britain over EU aid to poor

PARIS (R) - French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe attacked Britain Friday for seeking to slash its contribution to the European Union's (EU's) development fund for some of the world's poorest countries by one-third.

Mr. Juppe, president of the EU's Council of Ministers, said it was "neither politically nor morally acceptable" to offer 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) less money in real terms over the next five years than they received in 1990-95.

Mr. Juppe played down the refusal of Germany, the biggest contributor, to increase its payments in line with inflation, saying it had moved closer to France's proposals.

Instead, he singled out Britain for lacking European

solidarity and dismissed London's contention that it wanted to give more aid bilaterally instead of through Brussels.

"It is not true to say that some countries are increasing their bilateral aid and doing less multilaterally while others are doing the opposite. There are countries which are globally increase their development aid and countries which globally reduce it," he said.

Mr. Juppe cited figures showing Britain's total development aid had declined from 0.38 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) 1981-83 to 0.31 per cent in 1992, while France's had increased from 0.54 to 0.63 per cent of its GDP in the same

South African economic outlook brightest in a decade

JOHALINESBURG (R) -The Easth Airtic's economic to a special see of their brightin a decrete, but the counto has you to escape the liow-growth trap" which had . Tong plagated it. its top em-Of Ployer Pour has said.
We are still in that trap. iss gaid Bon van Rensourg, ecofromis policy of sour at the Ol South Arrivar Thanker of

dfi austross. "The jury is still out on whether we will be able to d creak out of that trap on a OF sustainable cosin." he told a news conference.

The chamber said the economy could grow 3.5 per cent nn this year after supending 2.1 her cont in 1994, the second the wear of slow recovery from its longest recession on record. But, with population growth running at nearly 2.5 her cent a year, much stronts ger sustained economic expansion was needed to improve general living stan-

dards significantly. "If you look where we're coming from, that (growth prospect) is good. But if you look at where we're going,

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it's not," chamber director general Raymond Parsons

Official figures show nearly half of the potential labour force is unable to find work in the formal sector of the economy. And, said Mr. Van Rensburg, it was able to absorb less than one in 10 new jobseekers, perhaps only one in 100.

The chamber's monthly business mood index showed confidence was stable in January at December's 108.2 level, but below last year's high of 1119 in July and August. Base 100 was 1990.

It said the mood had been tempered by recognition that investor confidence required stability in the post-apartheid national unity government -which last month was rocked by a bitter row between President Nelson Mandela and Deputy President F.W. de

and labour disruptions. Growth in excess of three

per cent... can therefore not be taken for granted, and fiscal and monetary manage-

mate, it said.

six billion rand (\$1.7 billion)

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surplus in 1993. And even at this stage of However, they still co-

recovery, it faced constraints such as inflation, balance of navments strains, drought

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investors.

ment of the economy remain important," it said. The 1994/95 budget due to be unveiled on March 15 would be crucial in shaping the future investment cli-

The chamber predicted average inflation of 10 per cent this year versus 9.3 per cent in 1994, and a widening off the current account deficit to 3.5 billion rand (\$1.0 billion) from an estimated 1.0 billion (\$286 million) last year, which showed a marked deterioration from the nearly

Net capital inflows last year, following a prolonged drain prior to last April's historic all-race elections, had boosted the central bank's gross gold and foreign exchange reserves by more than 50 per cent, it noted.

I KNEW IT.

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ded the country projected a good image to international

"In the light of the recent crisis in Mexico, international investment flows are likely to be even more discerning and risk-averse," the chamber

Meanwhile, a Washingtonbased research group said South Africa has attracted a marked increase in American business and investor interest since the dying days of apartheid and sanctions.

The Investor Responsibility Research Centre (TRRC) said a survey of 69 U.S. pension funds and other institutional investors found that more t....n half were already investing or planned to invest in South Africa in the next

SHE KEPT

THE FLOWERS.

Notably these relatively bullish attitudes were expressed in August or September, before South Africa had even obtained formal risk assessments from leading American credit rating agenvered only about two months' cies Moody's and Standard worth of imports, and it was and Poors, and the Japanese important such inflows conagency Nippon. tinued. This in turn deman-

They also preceded its inclusion in various prominent emerging market investment indices, it said in a report

released in Johannesburg. IRRC made no mention of the Mexican financial crisis which erupted in December and its potential impact on attitudes towards South Africa as investors reviewed emerging market risks and

rewards. It did say, however, that U.S. portfolio and corporate investors, while gradually showing more enthusiasm, still often had questions and concerns.

'Representatives of several U.S. institutional (portfolio) investors that are not yet investing in South Africa told IRRC that they are waiting to see how the new government's policies will work, or that they do not have enough knowledge of South African investment condi-

It said U.S. corporations were nevertheless increasing their profile in South Africa. adding that this month 183 had direct investment or employees in the country. This was a 36 per cent

saying "it's overdone at these levels."

jump since President Mandela called for the lifting of sanctions in September 1993, several months before last year's historic all-race elec-

It counted 498 companies with non-equities ties, such as licensing, franchise or sales agreements, with South Afri-

released by it last month, compared with 598 non-American multinationals with direct investments or employees in South Africa, and 442 with sales or licensing deals.

U.S. companies which have returned after disinvesting in the 1980s include Coca Cola, CPC International, IBM, Pepsico and Sara Lee. Ford has repurchased equity in its manufacturing opera-

U.S. companies which have entered South Africa for the first time include Apple Computer, Morgan Stanley and Hyatt International.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY FEBRUARY 18, 1995 By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Ideal day to investigate the philosophy that will make your life happier in the future. Step out with people you admire this evening and have a good time.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You have planned certain activities with relatives and there is no better day for them than now. Make your life far happier by right thinking and right acting. GEMINE (May 21 to June 21) A good day to sit down leasurely with

associates and dine while making better plans for the future. Do not neglect visiting your good friends this evening. MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Think big and can make plans for increasing your income in the future. Sit down with financial experts who are at leisure and get good ideas from them

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Good day to be with people you really like for recreation. Take time to improve your appearance so that you will be a big hit with everyone.

made that need to be kept today or chores that must be done so get at them and don't procrastinate. Use your vision in planning the LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Ideal day to enjoy the

company of friends you like and admire. Repaying some social obligations is good so that you are extended further invitations. SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A good day to sit down with some big wig you know and get the advice, data, and backing you need. Some civic task today could prove to be most helpful to you and your community.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Any interest you may have in some modern way of living can be investigated today and the best of those plans adopted. It is a good day to set plans for the trip you have your heart set on.

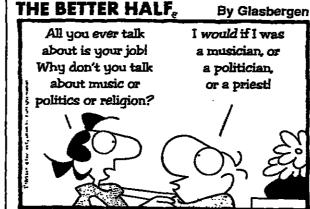
CAFRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Do those things which bring you added favour from those who are the greatest assistance to you. Show that you are appreciative of their special goodwill. AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can come to a better understanding with an associate in your home today than you can in your office. Contact those you want in your life for the days ahead. PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) There is some task you can get done today which should not be put off until another time. Those around you can be most helpful in helping you in fulfilling those

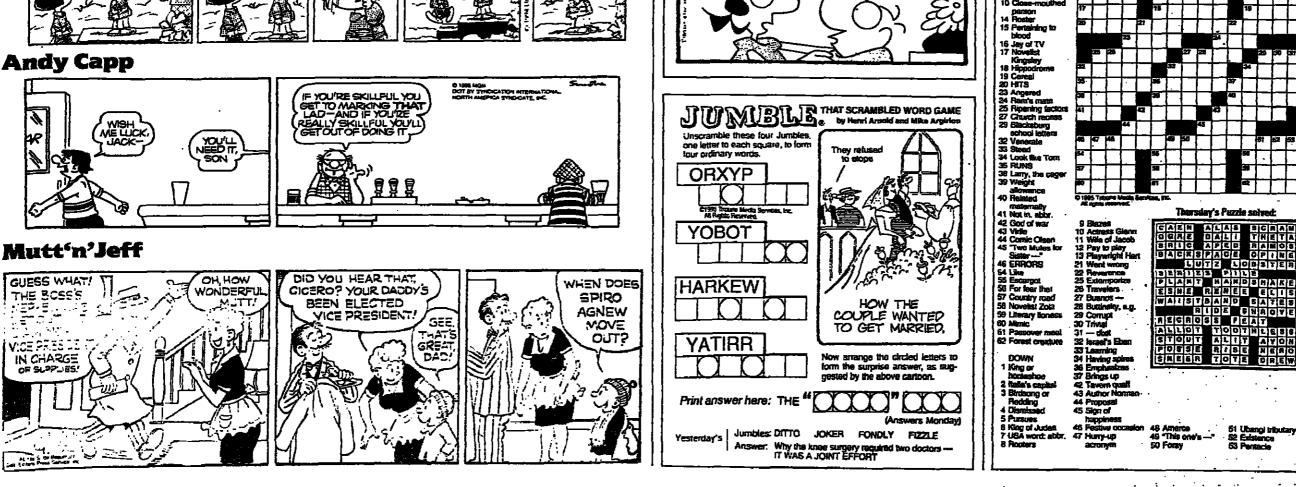
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Birthstone of February: Amethyst - Onyx

THE Daily Crossword by Eligence Putts







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MONTREAL (RIL. (Al Asway).

Ar Jordan's Middle East In-is then get a vestment Bank will raise its hack home capital to 10 million dinars radio repore (\$14.2 million) in a private in Canada --placement to allow it to ex-∵= film Elisa 🖭: pand banking services, its general manager has said. "We have finalised measures to raise our capital and it has 'God Must Have been agreed to raise it by a private placement with 50 per cent from old shareholders $P \land RIS(AP) = G$ and the rest from new inves-Have Forgotten b. tors." Marwan Awad, general manager of the Middle East Investment Bank, told Renters. He said the rise in capital to 10 million dinars (\$14.2 million) from four milion dinars (\$5.7 million) would be finalised in two months. It has been approved by an extraordinary general assembly. The bank, one of the Jordan's six investment banks, was given central bank approval last year to engage in commercial banking on completion of raising its capital. He said the bank's operating profits were 100,000 dinars (\$142,857) in 1994, reversing a loss of 146,000 dinars (\$208,571) the previous year. Mr. Awad said both the capital rise and a management restructuring of the bank will allow it to imported, spoiled & prove its deposit base and

India's 'Band ** To encourage the public to fly Royal Jordanian, the Queen' embri airline decided on measures by which certain flights will be arranged at prices that could be lower than 50 per NAGPUR, India li Indian Bandii (i Pheolan Devi, who cent of the cost of an economy class ticket. These sears behind hars fit flights, which will be outside gunning down not course her gang the normal schedule, will not require prior reservation (Al

return to net profit in 1995.

Total assets rose in 1994 to 50

million dinars (\$71.4 million)

from 28 million (\$40.0 mil-

lion) in 1993.

nere Dressed in see ** The Jordanian and U.S. Find Singh in the Frieddhist vows of per helps governments are currently drawing a broad outline for a free trade agreement bewestern Indianon tween the two countries. According to Western dinon Bombay, Cheff plomatic sources, the agreement, which is expected to be andus who had the signed in October and will include provisions unifying rested to the Budden customs fees on products be-Vis Devi took the way tween Jordan and the U.S. Vi- Singh, amid the The agreement is also exor wers, unfresses suf pected to remove customs sild to Dhamma in Gi barriers on American goods entering the Kingdom, especially cars, on condition that contrast monk who we contrast mentar during the contrast mentar during the contrast to the con Jordanian products exported to the U.S. are given the same treatment (Al Dus-

who is in her tally and in the same and the Euddha Fuir of Be taughter while Ruddha Fuir of Be taughter while Ruddha en Ruddha en Ruddha sein Rudd * The number of tourists Buddhi swill bridge and Wadi Araba crossing was 43,664 during the way of life and life for tourists stayed 87,330 nights in Jordan and spent about \$8 million (Al Aswaq). entering Jordan from Israel

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British firm sets up office in Amman to help businesses

By a Jordan Times staff reporter

AMMAN -- A British group has set up an office in Amman to act as a data centre that would help British firms do business with Jordan and other countries in the region as prospects have brightened with the breakthroughs in Arab-Israeli peace process.
The British Middle East

Interests Group, opened its regional official in Amman last week, will "act as a facilitator" by gathering and passing on information on opportunities and details relevant to doing business in the region, said Stephen Crouch, a senior representative of the group.

Mr. Crouch said he and colleagues have been holding a series of meetings in Amman in the past week. They held talks with Chief Chamberlain Prince R'ad Ben Zaid and Amman Financial Market (AFM) Director-General Omayya Touqan on Thurs-

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day.
"Our is a broad-based approach," covering all sectors and aspects of business including industries, exports and services, Mr. Crouch told the Jordan Times

"We are here to do business with the region and will be looking at prospects in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza," Mr. Crouch said, "We will also be arranging visits and meetings locally and in the region for British business-

Among the immediate tasks undertaken by the group is preparing for the participation of British firms in the Amman economic conference to be held in October, Mr. Crouch said. The Amman conference

will be a follow-up to the

economic summit held in

Casablanca, Morocco, late

The Amman conference is expected to discuss concrete proposals that were prebusinessmen and govern-ments hope that definite ideas would be forthcoming during the gathering on

financing for projects. Dozens of British firms attended the Casabianca conference and many of them have made significant progress in negotiating with Jordanian firms on joint pro-

However, not many British firms are keen in entering joint ventures with direct capital involvement, according to local businessmen. 'Most of them prefer to enter licensing arrangements and help in technological help while keeping financial involvement in the country to the minimum," said a Jordanian businessman

Mr. Crouch said his group would also be reviewing the facilities and incentives offered by the Jordanian government to foreign investors and at "effective means of what the British companies

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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can do and the Jordanian government can offer to facilitate business."

"We have already involved several Jordanian businessmen." in the group's activities, he added without elaboration. Britain has been a traditional trading partner for Jordan, but its ranking as one of

the top exporters to the king-

dom's private sector has de-

clined over the years However, many British consultants are working closely with the government in various sectors. British firms have been conducting studies on how best to transform the Telecommunications Cornoration and Royal Jordanian as well as the Jor-

A British firm is also conducting in-depth studies on the Qa Disi aquifer in the south to determine the best means to utilise the water of the subterranean reservoir.

dan Electricity Authority into

fully-fledged commercial en-

Trade talks give boost to Jordanian stock prices

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN - Positive political developments in the Middle East directly and indirectly linked to Jordan gave a boost to trading and stock prices at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) last week, brokers said Friday.

They attributed to the improvement in the market also to investor expectations that foreign funds were coming in after several months during which Western firms assessed the situation before making up their minds to buy Jordanian stock.

The weekly report of the AFM said last week's turnover was JD 4 million, up 17 per cent from the previous week's JD 3.4 million.

The general share price index closed at 143 points, gaining 2.3 points, or 1.7 per cent, during the week after

5.900

0.930 0.930

6.700 6.700 0.743 6.740

1.360 1.360 4.660 4.600 2.370 2.370

1.750 1.750 2.526 2.520

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1371218 INDEX MONRES: 124.13

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The index of the banking sector, the dominant segment in the market, closed at 159.7 points after gaining 2.6 points or 1.64 per cent; the insurance stock index went up by 0.8 points, or 0.6 per cent, to close at 136.30 points; the services sector index gained 4.1 points or 3.18 per cent, to close at 132.06 points; and the industrial sector index registered an increase of 1.7 points, or 1.4 per cent, and

closed at 124.11 points. Industrial stock accounted for JD 1.85 million, or 45.8 per cent, of the weekly volume, followed by com-mercial banks and financial institutions with JD 1.11 million, or 27.5 per cent, the services sector with JD 1.03 million, or 25.5 per cent, and insurance stock with JD 47,000 or 1.2 per cent, the

AFM report said. The report said 1.7 million shares of 73 companies were traded during the week; as steadily dropping over three trading closed on Wednesday, 43 of them had gained 17 had lost and 13 remained stable.

Brokers said there were several reasons for the rise. Foremost among them were the Feb. 7-8 meetings in Taba that brought together the ministers of trade from Jordan, Israel, Egypt and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jericho with U.S. Commerce Secretary of State Ronald Brown.

The Taba meeting, whose final statement contained a reiteration of the ministers to free regional trade, was followed by a brief visit to Aqaba by Mr. Brown.

In Aqaba, Mr. Brown announced that Jordan and the U.S. were working on a free trade agreement and that mitted to the economic development of the Kingdom.

"The Taba statement and Mr. Brown's comments in Agaba were music to Jordanian investors' ears," said a broker, who like other AFM dealers, are not allowed to be identified by name under

standing market guidelines. "The investors had already taken note of the cordiality of the Taba meeting which was totally unlike the differences and rift that characterise any Arab-Israeli meeting," said the broker.

Another factor that contributed to the rise in AFM prices was an investor anticipation that foreign operators might be coming in with funds into the market. The sentiment was sparked when they convinced themselves that foreign operators saw the prices had reached a bottom line two weeks ago when the index had gone down to less than 141 points.

The investors saw a foreign firm, which has not been active in the market despite having had secure permission several months ago, buying some of the Jordanian blue chips," said the broker.
Although the actual purch-

ase involved "only a small amount of funds," the very fact that a foreign firm was buying "was enough to trigger many into adopting advance positions by acquiring shares that they thought foreign companies might get around to buying," said the

"It may or may not work out that way, but that is the way Jordanian investors have set the rules of the game and behave in the market." added the broker.

Canadian dollar

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Dutch guilders

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs 1.4124/34 1.4832/42 1.6624/34 1.2530/40 30.54/58 5.1555/05 1603.8/4.8 97.28/38 5.8556/06

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\$1.5770/80 One sterling One ounce of gold \$376.30/376.70

Jordan Times tel 667171

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Financial Markets

Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank



Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

	Date: 16-2 1945		
Currency	Bid	Offer	
U.S. Dollar	0.8960	0.7000	
Sterling Pound	1.0936	1,247)	
Deutsche Mark	0.4035	0.4058	
Swiss Franc	0.5460	0.5507	
French Franc	J.1335	0,1342	
Japanese Yen ^a	0,7117	0.7153	
Dutch Gullder	0.4134	0.3155	
Swedish Krona	*****	*****	
Italian Lira"	0.0435	0.0437	
Belgian Franc		114041	

Other Currencies	Date: 16/5, 1995		
Currency	Bid	Offer	
Behraipi Dinar	1.5370	7.8490	
Lebanese Lira*	0.041845	0.042785	
Sandi Riyal	0.1856	0.1871	
Kuwaiti Disar	2.3500	2.3630	
Qutari Riyal	0.1905	0.14205	
Egyptian Pound	0.1850	0.2100	
Omani Riyal	1.8030	1.8740	
UAE Dirham	8.7896	0.1905	
Greek Dractima*	0.2835	0.3175	
Cypriot Pound	1.4235	1.5250	

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With European soccer goveming body UEFA demanding a report into Wednesday night's riot by English fans at an international match in Dublin, the English Football Association said moving the championship would amount to a vicrtory for the hooligans. "Euro '96 should and must

go ahead," FA spokesman David Davies told a press conference. "We understand the view of those who say the championship should not go ahead, but who would have won then: A tiny percentage of mindless thugs or more than a million genuine fans who want to have the footballing experience of a life-

Tournament director Glen Korton said the FA's 10point ticketing plan would prevent any known hooligan from gaining admission to the championship, which takes place in eight cities from June 8-June 30, 1996.

"I can guarantee any one on our list of undesirables will not get a ticket," Korton

The FA said it had launched an inquiry into the incident and its report would be on its way to UEFA headquarters in Switzerland next week. UEFA, which has the power to move the tournament out of England, said it would pass the report along with one from the FA of Ireland, on to the championship's organising committee for consideration. "It's a very sensitive prob-

UEFA spokesman Salvatore Cuccu said. "We need time to see what we are going to do because it is the major football event in England that could be in dan-

ger."
"We will wait to hear the full report before we make the final decision," added UEFA President Lennart

Several British newspapers and commentators in both Britain and Ireland called Thursday for England to withdraw as host. But FA chief executive Graham Kelly insisted his people could handle the job.

"We are fully capable, all the precautions that have been taken over the years, to carry on with staging that championship," Kelly said.

The riot began after Ireland scored the opening goal in the match at Lansdowne Road. English spectators, who had been taunting Irish supporters with Nazi salutes and chants such as "no sur-render to the IRA," began breaking up the wooden and metal bleachers and hurling pieces of them at the Irish



outside the stadium.

database that will list the

name of every fan who buys a

ticket. The purchaser's name

will be printed on the ticket

and only four will be avail-

able per person to keep them

out of the hands of scalpers.

no 100 per cent guarantee

that no person will pass on a

the Europeans after English

hooliganism appeared to be

on the wane. The violence

was at its worst when 39

Italian fans were killed in a

riot involving English specta-

tors at the European Cham-

pions Cup final in Brussels in

ity measures have eased the

problem since, the hooligans

have continued to make their

presence known. The last

time England played a game of any importance, a World

Cup qualifier in the Nether-

lands in October 1993, the

English rioted in the streets

latest in a spate of ugly inci-

dents that have marred soccer since last summer's World Cup. Fan deaths in Italy and

France led to mass postpone-

ments of games in those countries, and French and

Manchester United striker

Eric Cantona was banned for the rest of the English

into the stands to kick a

In Dublin Irish Prime

Minister John Bruton told a

hushed parliament on Thurs-

day that the soccer rioting

that halted a friendly match

between England and Ireland

was caused by "appalling

thuggery" by a minority of

spectator last month.

Irish PM condemns

'appalling thuggery'

This latest violence was the

of Rotterdam.

Although improved secur-

UEFA gave the England

But, Kirton said: "There is

Football chiefs face the media 16 February following Wednes-day's riots during the Ireland vs England match in Dublin. Graham Kelly. They called on genuine supporters to turn in the thugs and help them save the 1996 European Championships in the country (AFP photo) (L-R) are Glenn Kirton, director if Euro 96, David Davis, media spokesman, and Football Association Chief executive

fans beneath them.

The game was stopped after 28 minutes, the first time in English soccer history that a match involving the national team had to be abandoned due to crowd trouble.

Police arrested some 40 people from England and three from Ireland, and 40 people were treated at a hospital for various injuries, in one case a fractured skull. An Irish man in his 60s died of a heart attack while leaving the stadium, although police said he death was not thought to be related to the violence.

British news reports cited evidence that the violence was the work of a shadowy far-rightist group called Com-bat 18. The reports claimed the group has strong links with loyalist paramilitary organisations in Northern

The FA appealed to fans to identify the culprits. "Many of them were recognisable from newspaper

photographs or television stills," Davies said. "We urge true football supporters to ring if they can help. ... We trust the law will be used to its limits to punish those involved last night." Joao Havelange, president

of world governing body FIFA, disagreed with those calling for England to be removed as host of the Euro-

"Everything will continue as planned," Havelange said. lem which should be dealt with by local authorities, England does not deserve to have a sporting right with-

Because of the English fans' notorious reputation, the ticket allocation for the national team's away matches is strictly controlled by official soccer travel clubs, but fans at Wednesday night's game said the hooligans could have easily purchased their tickets from scalpers

Hooligans make headlines again Kirton said the plan for Euro' 96 involves a computer

LONDON (AP) — Arrogant. Intimidating. Proud. Unashamed. The English soccer hooligan. He's male, usually working class and poorly educated -

and extremely right-wing.

It would be easy to say he's back. But he never really

"The beleif in recent years that the problem has gone away or had even been cured, partly as a result of all-seater stadiums, is simply not true, said Eric Dunning of the Centre for Football Research at Leicester University.

The problem reared its ugly head again Wednesday night when hooligans forced the Ireland-England friendly in Dublin to be abandoned in the first half.

Ireland scored a goal to take the lead, that was the last

straw. The hooligans began ripping up the very stands they were sitting on and throwing wooden planks, medal railings and other projectiles onto the fans in the deck below. Some 40 people were hospitalised. It was a first even for England's notorious followers: Never before had the national team - in more than 122

years of international play — been forced to abandon a match because of crowd trouble. The offenders reacted not with remorse but with pride, waving and cheering to television cameras.

It was the same kind of defiance that had been seen time and again from England supporters across the continent in the 1970s and '80s.

In recent years, it appeared that the problem was on the wane after clubs and police tightened security in response to the fan violence of the '80s, which climaxed when 39 Italians were killed in a riot involving English spectators at the European Champions Cup final in Brussels, Belgium, in May 1985.

Surveillance cameras were installed at most grounds.

All-seater stadiums were mandated for top clubs. Lists of known hooligans were compiled in an effort to keep them from getting tickets to away matches.

But that didn't eradicate the problem, says Patrick Murphy, also of the Leicester Research Centre. He says the government and the media, in an effort to "deny the hooligans the oxygen of publicity," had stopped reported all but the most obvious incidents. There has been an attempt to minimise the level of

of the policies," Murphy said. "The grounds are well-

policed, but the success within the grounds has led to displacement and a level of disorder outside the grounds, and these incidents have gone unreported.

"The British transport police listed over 600 fans-related incidents from 1990-94, the vast majority unreported,"

ich the hooligans continues, and to maximise t

Murphy said. "What was previously a very sexy subject which led to sensational headlines has been downgraded or On the international level, it helped that England's national team hadn't played a road game more than a year before Wednesday's trip to Dublin. At its last match of any significance, a World Cup qualifier in the Netherlands in

Rotterdam. But the ugliners in Ireland once again put soccer on the front page. British newspapers called the hooligans everything from "scum" to "lepers of the world."

October 1993, the English fans rioted in the streets of

There actually as human as we are, but they adhere to different values." Murphy said. "They predominantly come from working class backgrounds and have an aggressive masculinity, seen in the street culture, that manifests itself in many facets of society. Murphy said the hooligans showed tendencies of

xenophobia, racism and sexism "Being brought up in their kind of background, fighting becomes a source of status to them, part and parcel of this is gang formation and the willingess to hunt in packs." No reply for England-Ireland match

England will not be returning to Dublin in the forseeable future, despite Ireland manager Jack Charlton's plea to rearrange the match, abandoned after hooligans rioted on

Charlton suggested the match could be rescheduled before the end of the season, but Englands Football Association (F.A.) consider the idea impractical.

'It's a little bit early to start rearranging the match," F.A. spokeswoman Clare Tomlinson said Friday.
"There is still a lot of work to be done on finding out

what went wrong and why it went wrong."

Greek clubs top standings

LONDON (R) — Former NBA star Eddie Johnson to lead Olympiakos to an 89-64 triumph over Bologna in a European Clubs' Championship qualifier in Athens Thursday.

The victory secured the Greeks second place in Group B giving them the home advantage in the play-

With one match left in the semifinal series, French champions Limoges top the group, cementing their position on Thursday with a 76-67 victory over fallen Spanish giants Badalona.

Efes Pilsen moved into third place after an 81-76 success against Barcelona who slipped back to fourth with Bologna.

In Group A. Panathinaikos and Real Madrid are safely through to the next stage, the Greeks beating Ljubljana 79-66 and the Spanish club dis-missing Paok Salonika 69-52

on Thursday. The top four clubs from each group progress to the

Italy's Pesaro are also through after an easy 88-69 Group A victory lover Benfi-

But the star Thursday night was Johnson with his fine 34

'It was about time I found my touch," Johnson said after the final whistle in Athens as 15,000 fans chanted his

The Greeks were explosive, leading throughout de-spite the absence of two of their best players with broken

legs.
They shrugged off last week's home defeat by Limoges, largely through Johnson's remarkable long-

range accuracy.

Bologna relied on Serb
power forward Predrag Danilovic who sank 27 points.

American Michael Young also scored 27 points — for Limoges who were generally



Lithuanian player of Real Madrid Arvidas Sabonis (right) goes for a layup (AFP photo)

EUROPEAN BASKETBALL

in control against Badalona. The French club led 29-20 after 15 minutes, but at half-time it was 38-37 as the Spaniards clung on.

Young turned on the heat in the second half. "It was difficult at times but we were able to find the right solutions and Mike (Young) helped us tremendously," said Limoges playmaker

Frederic Forte. "We didn't play a great match but we knew a place in the last eight was at stake and we were a little bit tense, said captain Richard Dacoury. "We won and that's all that really counts."

Real Madrid beat Paok Salonika with strong per-formance by foreigner Arvi-das Sabonis of Lithuania.

STANDINGS Group A B

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Group B

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lympiakos (Greece) imoges (France) fes Pilsen (Turkey) ologna (Italy) arcelona (Spain) ibona Zagreb (Croatia) ayer Leverkusen (Germany)	13 13 13 13 13 13	9 9 8 7 7 4	4 4 5 6 6 6 9	2 2 2 2 2 2 1
oventut Badalona (Spain)	13	ĭ	12	

Atlanta plans largest torch relay

largest torch relay in the history of the Olympics is planned for the 1996 centennial of the modern games, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG)

announced Thursday.

ACOG president Billy
Payne said that once the torch is delivered to the United States on April 27 after a ceremony in Athens, the torch relay will last 84 days and cover some 15,000 miles. With the addition of 16 days of competition, the Olympic flame will burn for 100 days in the United States

to mark the centennial. "The torch relay route we are planning will allow millions of Americans to view the Olympic flame as it passes through or near their communities," said Payne, who added that 10,000 torchbearers would have the opportunity of carrying the

In the spring of 1996, the Olympic flame will be kindled from the rays of the sun in a traditional ceremony in Olympia, Greece, the birthplace of the Olympics. The Hellenic Olympic Committee will organise a torch relay across Greece before the torch is transferred to ACOG's guardianship.

Milan-Lazio rematch a must-win for both

ie their current 11-game undefeated string, t

A loss for either club in his rematch of the season's best

Following a 1-1 draw with Genoa on Wednesday in the makeup for the Jan. 29 match suspended following the death of a fan, Milan is 7-9-3 (30 points) and in a virtual tie

for sixth place.

Lazio is 9-4-6 (31 points) and tied for fourth.

Both trail leader Juventus of Turin (42 points) by significant but not insurmountable margins. The clubs have

Milan, after sweeping handily to the past three first division crowns, struggled with injuries and sloppy play through this season's early rounds. Lazio opened strongly,

That loss, in the third round, was a heartbreaking 2-1 defeat at Milan's San Siro Stadium in a spectacular encounter: a fast-paced match with creative and solid play

Milan has recovered from its otherwise poor start to the year, although it can only count for wins among its 11 games without a loss.

Lazio must turn itself around and put an end to a two-match losing streak.

The Romans will have to do it without Argentine Jose Chamot, the cornerstone of the defence, who begins serving a three-match suspension.

has begun to find its rhythm but is still inconsistent. Montenegrin forward Dejan Savicevic, back from a onegame suspension, should find space for his imagintive play. The story of the game will be Lazio's high-powered offense — which has registered a league-best 37 goals but just one in the last two games — against Milan's stingy

After tripping up with consecutive losses, Juve has

Napoli on Sunday. Juve's Croat defender Robert Jami is out suspended,

Juve is also very strong at home: All three of its losses came on the road. Striker Gianluca Vialli has netted of his 10 goals at Delle Alpi Stadium.

The white-and-black must avoid its proclivity for let-

Second-place Parma, three points off the lead, struggled to beat lowly Padova last Sunday and now travels to

straight matches without a loss. AS Roma, in third, travels to Genoa, which played well

Other games Sunday: Cremonese-Fiorentina; Foggia-Sampdoria of Genoa; Internazionale of Milan-Brescia; Padova-Torino; and Reggiana-Bari.

ROME (AP) - AC Milan isn't accustomed to must-win matches, other than prestigious cup finals. defending Italian and European champs face such a dire

situation this Sunday at Lazio of Rome. game to date would snuf championship hopes.

been heading in opposite directions, however.

dropping just one of its first 10 games.

The top players shined, with now-departed Dutchman Ruud Gullit scoring Milan's goals — including the winner in injury time - and Italian international Giuseppe Signori feeding Croat striker Alen Boksic for Lazio's score. Goalkeepers Sebastiano Rossia and Luca Marchegiani also

That's welcome news for the red-and-black attack, which

When healthy, Signori and Boksic form the most potent

Maldini, Alessandro Costacurta and youngster Christian Panucci help Rossi protect his net better than any other Of course, the Milan-Lazio encounter - like all others

plays to its potential the rest of the season. recovered with back-to-back wins and hosts mediocre

which gives hope to Napoli's inconsistent attack. But the Turin side should be too strong at all positions, as it proved to be in a 2-0 victory in the clubs' third-round match.

downs against poor clubs such as Napoli, tied for 11th in the 18-team league.

streaking Cagliari. The Sardinians, in eighth, have gone six

against Milan. Roma gets back suspended midfielder Francesco Monero and sweeper Fabio Petruzzi, but loses midfielder Francesco Statuto to suspension.

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URANO, Japan (Agencies) Albeno Tomba, yet to win World Cup race in Japan. pressed quiet confidence 3 Friday ahead of this much as because tekend's giant slalom and because : alom and said he would is getting

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adicate any victory to the mins of the Kobe earthbility that competin The 28-year-old Italian has years afte a in races this season and season. sell on course for his first He has orld Cup overall title after chance th aching runner-up in 1988. here two

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More than 5,300 people hilled by the earthquake In Satu en devastated the major

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The Immigrant Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:

Tel.; 6

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Q.3—Both

Yusra. Mahmoud Hamed

For more information please call Tel. 830638 Fax. 831674 one-two in Italy. Likewise veterans Franco Baresi, Paolo REQUIRED An international trading company requires for this week and future weeks - will be irrelevant if Juventus

ordan's women's basketball team targets Asian Championship

By Aleen Bannayan Special to the Jordan Times

AMAN — Having waited for the past 12 years for it to ppen, most players now cannot believe it has come true. Ves. the women's national baskethall team has been ally regrouped, and players are actually training three es a week.

After the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) met with yers of five clubs to announce the intention to regroup team which last competed in 1983, forty players showed for practice. Following a week of matches, the number for practice. Following a week of matches, the number is reduced to 20. Players representing Al Orthodoxi, Al zireh and Al Ahli clubs are: Rana Husseini, Shireen Abu hader, Rania Al Dajani, Indeira Qasessieh, Tala Al ange, Tamara Al Khadra, Hind Al Ghouri, Suhair ackusi, Jumana Salni, Zein Sha'shaa', Sirsa Naghawey, Ila Makaira, Hala Makaira, Fira Facat, Diras Shaday,

Real Madrid Arvidas Sabouk, Jumana Salti, Zein Sha'shaa', Sirsa Naghawey, ackusi, Jumana Salti, Zein Sha'shaa', Sirsa Naghawey, ala Muheisen, Hala Khalaf, Zina Farah, Dima Shadeed, tyvana Qardan, Maryam Ta'ani, Sirsa Abaza, Hala hattas, and Lubna Al Masri.

Now the next big hurdle the JBF and its women's laining to enable the team to take part in the cassary funding to enable the team to take part in the

cessary funding to enable the team to take part in the 'omen's Asian Championship scheduled for July 23-30 in

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Lesto opened victims of the Kobe earth-

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Quake.

The 28-year-old Italian has

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STANDINGS

We didn't play pan.

The last eight was a self fort in order to adapt to each other's play while the were a little by paches seek to further improve their individual all round captain be all and team spirit.

were a little by paches seek to further improve the said capitain Ricills and team spirit.

Dacoury We we According to the training programme drawn up by the that's all that really earn's coaches Fadi Al Sabbah and Saleh Al Zaher, the Real Madrid beau nail 12 players of the team will be named in May after a Salonika with such orough training schedule of up to five times a week and formance by foreign bilowing the conclusion of the women's championship das Sabonis of Line thick is scheduled for April when players will be busy

playing for their respective clubs.

The coaches have advised that the JBF arrange some friendly matches against Syrian or Lebanese teams, host an Asian team in Amman in June and then play an Asian team on the way to Japan so as to be best prepared before the

possible participation in the Asian Championship. Despite the fact that the JBF had seemed serious about maintaining a national women's team, most players do not think they will have the chance to represent their country in Japan for the simple reason that the JBF has a budget of JD 12,000 while the youth's and men's teams also have their respective championships in the Philippines and Japan. Each delegation will cost the JBF a minimum

In addition, players have become disillusioned by the offhand approach the women's game has received from officials over the past years. The JBF's regrouping of the women's team was quite overdue since a regular annual championship has been held since 1989 and many players have since quit sensing that their commitment to the game

Although having only a single two-week-long competition as an incentive to play, Al Orthodoxi, Al Ahli and Homentmen maintained women's teams until 1991 when Al Jazireh entered the competition finishing fourth. They took third place from Homentmen in 1992 and clinched the trophy by scoring a major upset against Al Orthodoxi in 1993. Al Orthodoxi regained the crown in 1994 in an incomplete championship when Al Jazireh abruptly pulled out of the competition citing differences with the JBF, while the only other competing team was Abu Nusair, a lowly newcomer. Homentmen and Al Ahli staved out of the competition with an incomplete lineup, while Al Watani registered a team for the first time but did not take



CLEVELAND (AP) - Terrell Brandon scored a careerhigh 31 points and sank the two winning free throws with 21.8 seconds left in overtime as the Cleveland Cavallers beat the Orlando Magic 100-

The Cavs improved to 5-1 in overtime games and made Mike Fratello the 24th NBA coach to reach 400 career

Orlando, which had a three-game winning streak end, has lost its last three road games.

Shaquille O'Neal led the Magic with 26 points. Dennis Scott had 19, including a 3pointer with 12.3 seconds to play in regulation that sent the game into overtime.

Timberwolves 101, 76ers 97: In Philadelphia Doug West scored a season-high 33 points and the Minnesota Timberwolves overcame the early ejection of leading scorer Isaiah Rider to defeat the

Philadelphia 76ers. Donyell Marshal added 17 points and 11 rebounds for Minnesota, which won for only the sixth time in 25 games.

West scored 14 of his points in the thrid quarter when the Timberwolves. trailing 62-58, scored 17 straight on their way to a 73-69 lead at the end of the third period.

Pacers 114, Pistons 88: in Indianapolis, Reggie Miller scored 31 points on 10-of-15 shooting as the Indiana Pacers broke a two-game losing streak with a victory over the Detroit Pistons.

second period of the game at the Arena in

run that allowed the Pacers to

open up a 99-81 advantage. Bulls 107, Bullets 92: In

Chicago Scottie Pippen had

24 points, eight rebounds and

six steals as the Chicago Bulls

defeated the Washington

Toni Kukoc had 22 points

and a career-high 12 re-

bounds and Steve Kerr added

11 of his 17 points in the

fourth quarter, when Chicago

held off a Washington rally.

Howard scored 22 points

each for the Bullets, who

committed 25 turnovers in

losing for the seventh time in

Suns 120, Trail Blazers 113, OT: In Phoenix, A.C.

Green hit a layup in overtime

to give Phoenix its first lead

since the first quarter, then

their last eight games.

Chris Webber and Juwan

Indiana Pacers #32 forward, Dale Davis, fails to stop Orlando Magic #1 guard, Anfernee Hardaway, from scoring two points late in the

Orlando, Fl. (AFP photo)

Joe Dumars led Detroit Hill had 18 points on 7-of-11 with 25 pionts, 16 in the first half. Pistons rookie Grant shooting, 10 rebounds and two blocked shots. Miller had seven points during an 10-2 fourth-quarter

STANDINGS

Eastern Conference Atlantic Division .776 .638 .417 .392 .383 .286 .255 38 30 20 20 18 14 12 17 28 31 29 35 35 Central Division 31 29 28 24 18 19 .633 .583 .490 .469 18 30 .375 121/2 Western Conference Midwest Division 15

Utah San Antonio 17 .638 Houston 20 19 27 28 37 .426 Denver .404 .245 12 Minnesota Pacific Division 39 34 10 Phoenix 13 Seattle L.A. Lakers 20 22 33 Sacramento .532 .298 13 24 31 Portland Golden State .163 L.A. Clippers

many by 41 hundredths of second to win a women's World Cup downhill Friday. 8 41 RESULTS Street flashed down the Olympia course, shortened to 1,801 metres because of a Philadelphia Minnesota heavy snowfall in the past 100, 114, Orlando Cleveland week, in 1 minute, 9.11 <u>Indiana</u> Detroit 107, Chicago Washington

Boston

Orlando New York New Jersey Miami Philadelphia Washington Charlotte Cleveland Chicago Atlanta Detroit 111-2 99, OT Portland 113, OT L.A.Lakers 102, Seattle

put the game out of reach with two free throws with 29 seconds left as the Suns beat the Portland Trail Blazers. Charles Barkley had 35 points and 14 rebounds and made two crucial baskets earty in overtime before he was ejected for his second technical with 2:17 left. Green finished with 22 points and 12 rebounds.

Lakers 102, Sonies 96: In Inglewood, California, Eddie Jones, coming off a 25-point performance in the NBA rookie game, scored 19 points as the Los Angeles Lakers beat Seattle to end the Supersonics' 10-game road winning streak.

The Lakers outscored Seattle 28-17 in the third quarter as the Supersonics made just five of 25 shots from the floor and trailed 87-72 going into the final

Nick Van Exel added 19 points for the Lakers and George Lynch had 15.

Gary Payton led Seattle with 24 points, Shawn Kemp had 20 and Detlef Schremof

Celtics 116, Warriors 115: In Oakland, Calif., Dino Radja's layup with 1.9 seconds remaining gave the Boston Celtics a victory over Golden State, keeping interim coach Bob Lanier winless in two games.

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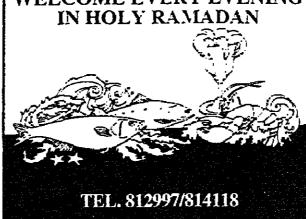
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ANSWERS TO WE

1gainst Milans with the most prove hold:

29.1—Both vulnerable, as South with the most prove hold:

29.1—Both vulnerable, as South with the most proven hold:

29.1—Both vulnerable, as South with the most proven hold:

29.1—Both vulnerable, as South with the most proven hold:

29.1—Both vulnerable, as South with the most proven hold:

29.1—Both vulnerable, as South vulne

no trump. What action do you take?

A.—You would like to play in your better combined major, but unfortunately, there's no way to accomplish that. When holding two five-card tagiors and a weak hand, simply sign off in your stronger suit. Bid two hearts.

Tit his remarken of the sext Italian Alberto Tomba clears a gate as he wins his 10th World Cup race earlier this month (AFP photo)

Tomba will dedicate win to Kobe victims

World Grounds) and maximum formula a World Grounds, yet to win

Alberto Tomba, yet to win

Alberto Tomba, yet to win

World Grounds a World Grounds as World Grounds as I are have Both

Ashim Vogt and Spring

Seizinger

much as I ever have. Both

because I am winning and

because the end of my career is getting near," he said.

bility that he would continue

competing for up to two more

years after his successes this

He has given himself every

chance this weekend, arriving

here two days before his riv-

als to counter jet lag.
"I wanted to come here as

early as possible because I

wanted to erase jet lag," he

and Marc Girardelli of Lux-

In Saturday's giant slalom, Tomba's main rivals will be

the discipline's defending

embourg on 563.

Tomba now has 1,050 world cup points, followed by Slovenia's Jure Kosir on 570

Tomba left open the possi-

INT Pass 2 4 Pass

cooperate with the Stayman inqui-ry, you still have a combined right-card fit in a major and the values for game, no more. The way to describe this hand is to jump to four hearts. That's a abut-out bid, requesting Q.4-Both vulnerable as South

Achim Vogt and Swiss

In the slalom on Sunday,

Kosir and Olympic champion

Thomas Stangassinger will be

Tomba's most dangerous

Asked if he would compete

in a super-giant slalom event

later this season to ensure the

overall title, Tomba once

again ruled out any such pos-

opponents.

diplomats.

Michael Von Grueningen.

you hold:

•EQ78 VAQ10652 Q5 •8
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 NT Page 2 • Page
2 V Page ? What do you bid now?

A.—This time you definitely have slam interest, so a jump to four hearts is barred. While two hearts

would still be a one-round force (de-pending on partnership methods), it will be difficult later to distin-guish between game and slam aspirations. Clarify matters now by jumping to three hearts. ♦7 TKQJ9852 :953 ♦102 Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond? A.—This is a question of whether to jump to four hearts to tell partner you want to play it right there, or to adopt a slower approach. Since the hand contains seven losers. our choice is to respond two hearts, intending to make minimum heart bids at each subsequent turn.

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Street of the United States

beat Katja Seizinger of Ger-

seconds.

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Q.6-As South vulnerable vo hold: #J1073 VAI0432 062 #AQ The bidding has proceeded: South West North East Pass 1 + 2 NT*

•—Minor-suit takeout What action do you take? A.—You have a dead minimum opening bid, but reasonable fourcard support for partner's suit.
Since the latter fact could be essential to partner's judgment of the
possibilities, we would hid three

and any responsion of a major.

and any responsion of a major. as nened of the same of the sa

Q.3-Both vulnerable, as South Pass

Q.5—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold: What do you bid now? A.—Although partner could not Tel.: 634144 Cinema Tel.: 699238

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UNITED NATIONS (Agen- the compound after Iraqi cies) - Iraq has the capability to develop biological warfare agents within weeks although it does not appear to be actively building the weapons to deliver them. according to a U.N. official.

U.N. inspectors believe Baghdad has the expert knowledge and the equipment — chemicals and centrituges — needed for production, Tim Trevan, a spokes-man for the U.N. Special Commission on Iraq, said. The commission is charged

M M

with the dismantling of Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, a condition of the cease-fire that ended the 1991 Gulf war.

Commission chief Rolf Ekeus left for Baghdad Thursday on a routine trip to review the elaborate network of cameras, sensors and overflights used to detect any attempts to revive the weapons programmes. He also plans to press Iraqi officials for information on their past biological weapons prog-

In December, Mr. Ekeus reported to the Security Council that Iraq's account of its past biological weapons programme was "minimal." Despite Iraqi claims that its programme was nascent and defensive, "indications all point to an offensive programme." he said. Mr. Trevan said that all the

equipment and chemicals found by inspectors has legitimate purposes, such as producing medicines.
But he warned those same

goods could be used to develop cholera, tuberculosis or other agents, and Iraq could do so within weeks if the inspectors left. Several months ago, U.N.

inspectors discovered several kilogrammes of a compound in which deadly germs could be cultivated at the Al Hakem animal feed plant, Mr. Trevan said.

U.N. inspectors destroyed

officials could not prove it had a legitimate use, he said. U.N. inspectors monitor the Al Hakem plant and

other plants that could be converted to produce biological weapons through routine visits, by cameras installed at the plants and by testing samples of chemicals and products, Mr. Trevan

The U.N. commission reports to the Security Council every six months on Iraq's weapons programmes. The reports have portrayed Iraqi officials as evasive and deceptive in meeting inspectors' demand for information.

Iraqi compliance with the U.N. inspectors in setting up the monitoring programme is one of the Security Council's conditions for lifting the oil and trade embargo the United Nations imposed against Iraq after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The New York Times reported Thursday Baghdad has set up an underground network to export oil and bypass the U.N. sanctions.

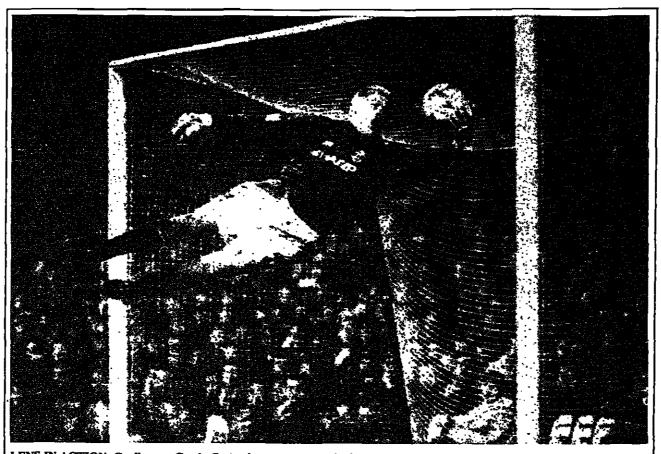
Quoting unnamed oil industry executives and traders, the Times said the illicit sales have generated up to \$800 million in the past year Hundreds of trucks take

the crude oil to Turkey or Iran across Kurdish territory in the north of Iraq. The Kurds, who fought the Iraqi army immediately after the war, did not interfere with the trucks because they are allowed to collect a tax on each one, the Times said. Dozens of small tankers

also sail from the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr, where the oil is reloaded onto other tankers bound for Mediterranean Once it is out of the coun-

try, the oil moves easily since Iraq sells it for \$8 a barrel. compared to a market price.

(Continued on page 7)



LENS IN ACTION: Goalkeeper Catch, first prize sports by David Spurdens, Sunday Express U.K. in the World Press Photo contest and exhibition '95 (AFP photo)

Christopher: No hasty action on Jerusalem

WASHINGTON (Agencies)
— Secretary of State Warren Christopher has cautioned against "precipitous action" in moving the U.S. embassy in Israel to occupied Jerusalem but admitted President Bili Clinton was sympethetic to an eventual move.

Mr. Christopher told a House of Representatives sub-committee that Washington did not want to do anything at present that would disrupt delicate talks between Israel and the Palestinians, especially over the sensitive issue of Jerusalem.

In their 1993 peace deal, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) made Jerusalem a "final status" issue to be decided in a three-year round of talks scheduled to begin next year.

Earlier this month, two New York senators — Democrat Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Republican Alfonse D'Amato — circulated a letter calling for the U.S. embassy to be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem once those talks end in 1999. The president has indi-

cated a good deal of sympathy for the position taken by that letter but he has also said he thinks we should do nothing to interfere or disrupt the process by which the parties might reach their own conclusion." Mr. Christopher

"Until the parties have reached a decision on this subject I don't think it would be appropriate for the United States to take some action that would be precipitous and might interfere with the peace process itself," the secretary of state added.

Nevertheless, the implication of his remarks - as in an interview with Reuters last week when he said the position of Mr. Moynihan and Mr. D'Amato was "not different from ours" — was that the administration would like to move the embassy once the Israel-PLO talks con-

U.S. officials and indepen-

dent analysts say Jerusalem is probably the most difficult of all the issues facing Israel and the Palestinians. During his presidential campaign. President Bill

Clinton told Jewish leaders in New York in March 1992: "I believe in the principle of moving our embassy to Jerusalem, but I do not think we should do anything to interfere with the peace process." Since Mr. Clinton took office in January 1993. U.S.

officials have preferred to say as little as possible on the issue, for fear of upsetting one side or the other and torpedoing the already shaky peace process. In his comments on Thurs-

day, Mr. Christopher emphasised it is the U.S. position

"to assist those who are taking risks for peace." Mr. Christopher said that because the Palestinian Authority "has taken major risks" in order to carry out the declaration of principles between Israel and PLO, "it is much in our interest to continue to support economic development within Gaza and Jericho.

With the Palestinians have had difficulty containing terror within both areas. Mr. Christopher said he believes that during the past 10 days or two weeks PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat "has recog-nised that the terrorism is really aimed directly at him ... because the terror is undermining his ability to govern." He noted that Mr. Arafat has "taken stronger steps" than before, including the arrest of large numbers of members of the Islamic

Mr. Mestiri is scheduled to

meet the Talibans on Satur-

day to try to persuade them

to join the council - or at

least encourage them not to

On the front lines just 15

kilometres south of Kabul,

Taliban leaders said their

own ruling council would de-

cide on the next move for the

Afghanistan is an Islamic

government, with Islamic

laws and an Islamic system,

said Mullah Bor Jan, the

commander of the Taliban's

The other Islamic militias

say they want the same thing,

but their three-year battle for

power has discredited them

in the eyes of many Afghans.

and looting, this is not an

"There is shelling, robbing

'The only thing we want in

Mestiri said.

attack the city.

frontline troops.

Hamas threatens to kill Musa Arafat

GAZA CITY (Agencies) -The armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement. Hamas, threatened Friday to kill one of Yasser Arafat's top security officials unless the arrest of its members stopped.
"The bullets of Qassam

will not be forgiving," read a statement signed by Izzedine Al Qassam, the military wing of Hamas.

The filth of the military intelligence, headed by Musa Arafat, have arrested many Qassam heroes and put them in jails," said the statement distributed at Friday prayers at Palestine Mosque, a Hamas stronghold in Gaza City. The statement marked

the first strong antinisation (PLO) warning issued in Gaza since clashes between Palestinian police and Hamas supporters left 13 people dead on Nov. 18.

You must know Musa Arafat, and all those behind you, that we will not remain helpless this time ... we have been quiet for too long," the Qassam statement said.

The security official is no relation to Yasser Arafat, the PLO chief and head of the Palestinian self-rule authority. "To the honourable

brothers in the Palestinian Authority, we ask you and those in Fateh to stop people like that. We don't want to create strife," Qassam It was the first mention of

arrests among Hamas's armed wing. Hamas said "the Jews,

through their agents" in the self-rule authority sought to cause a bloodbath among **Palestinians** "We in the Izzedine Al Qassam brigades will not

stand idle this time and your savage arrest of any holy struggler from Qassam will exact a very heavy price." the statement said. Palestinian police have cracked down on radicals.

rounding up 20 Hamas men in the last two weeks, according to Emad Faluji, a leader of the group. But he said none of them were Hamas armed mili-

tants, and nor had police impounded weapons, which the Qassam statement About 30 members of

Islamic Jihad, a smaller group responsible for killing 21 Israelis near Tel Aviv last month, were also detained. Like most Hamas politic-

al leaders, Mr. Faluji dissociates himself from his group's armed wing. "This is not our way of dealing with matters," he said of the

At Palestine Mosque, meanwhile, Hamas supporters staged a short play mocking Palestinian police as corrupt and siding with collaborators against those fighting the Israelis.

In one scene, a Palesti nian police officer, dressed in a green beret and dark sunglasses, sat in his office with his feet propped on his desk.

An assistant brought in a collaborator with Israel. The suspect was about to be sent to a ceil when the officer's phone rang and he was ordered by a superior to release the man. At few minutes later,

bearded Islamic act vist was brought in on charges he fired at an Israeli ar ny patrol. The office beat the suspect, ordered his men to send him to a cell and then shouted, as they walked away, to "kill him." Hamas and Islamic Jihad have

claimed responsibility for a number of attacks since October that have killed 56 Israelis.

A pro-Arafat mosque preacher on Friday accused Syria of backing the suicide bombers in order to disrupt the Israel-PLO autonomy accord and prevent the expansion of self-rule to the West Bank. Israel has said that it would not withdraw from West Bank towns until Mr. Arafat proved he could foil suicide attacks.

"Syria used to be very concerned about getting back every inch of Palestinian territory," Sheikh Hi-jazi Birbari said at the Kateeba Mosque where Mr. Arafat attended noon oravers.

Why doesn't Syria send its own suicide bombers to Israel?" asked the preacher.

Charles blessed with gospel LONDON (AP) - The

cally. Los Angeles' Crenshau elite high school gospel choir delivered an inspired rendition of God bless the Prince of Wales to Prince Charles at his home in London's St James' Palace. "It was wonderful," he said. "You must teach the Welsh how to sing it." The prince, who first met the choir during a visit to Los Angeles in November, invited them to his home when he heard they planned a European tour. His charity, the Prince's Trust, helped organise accommodation and transport for the choir. Choir mistress Iris Stevenson brushed off royal protocol to give Prince Charles a hug as she had on their last meeting "The kids thinks of the prince as a friend," Ms. Stevenson said. "He's very kind and he's made a big impression on them. We pray for the prince in his daily duties and comes from our hearts." Afterwards, the choir toured the cavernous palace. "It's a gorgeous place — and big too, if I might say so," said 16-year-old soloist Leland Ju-

Police halt classes at 'illegal". university

SKOPJE (R) — Macedoman police stopped lectures at an Albanian-language university, declared illegal by the authorities, within hours of it opening near the western town of Tetovo Thursday. Eyewitnesses said there was no violence but university rector Fadil Sulejman threatened to call on ethnic Albanians to prevent police intervening, again Friday. Sources at the private Albanian Television (ART) in Tetovo said police stopped classes after 90 minutes and prevented lectures in philosophy and the theory of literature. A police spokesman said about 80 students had gathered on Albanian religious premises in the village of Poroj outside Tetovo where most of the population are ethnic Albanians. He alleged that Mr. Sulejman told police that "the university will continue to work, no matter what the price, and that if police continue to prevent the lectures he will call on 200,000 Albanians to de-

from elections TAIPEI (AP) — Taiwan wili restrict the political aspirations of former convicts in a bid to curb the growing influence of organised crime in politics, Justice Ministry officials said. Those convicted of involvement in seven types of felonies — including drug trafficking, extortion, prostitution, possession of firearms and organised crime - will be barred from running for elected posts, the officials said. First-time convicts would be allowed to run five years after their release if they had not committed additional crimes, the officials said. Second offenders. however, would be banne for life, they added. The proposal, which still need approval from the Central Election Commission and parliament, was made in view of the growing number of gangsters involved in election activities, the officials said.

jailed for killing wife

AIX-EN-PROVENCE France (AFP) — An 83-year-old man suffering from prostate cancer has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for killing his wife, thus becoming France's oldest prison inmate, court officials here announced. Basile Roditiswho was sentenced Tuesday by the court, was charged with fatally shooting his wife Norma, 79, in the throat last October. He claimed that her death was a suicide but the couple's four children testified that their mother was not depressed and described their father as a tyrant who demanded "absolute submission" from his wife. Mr. Roditis defended himself by attributing his temper to sexual problems he experienced because of his cancer treatment. The couple had been married 56

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Madur suffers new win popularity

PRS (AFP) — The popuand French Prime Minis-^b Edouard Ballactur dipped aph in a new poll released tr Saturday, two months and of a presidential elecmin which he is the leading newspaper Journal Dinanche, gave Mr. Balatta 46 per cent popularity 10 points down on his per cent showing last Dissatisfaction with Ar. Balladur also rose, to 48 to cent from last month's 41 ra cent. Polisters IFOP carand out the survey from Feb. to lo. questioning 1.886 pople throughout the coun-The poll confirms recent ladings that Mr. Balladur, and as a runaway winner at the sam of the year, has been apping in public esteem.

The three main market re-For companies BVA. FOP and SOFRES, pubsurveys last Tuesday that gave him only a narrow against his nearest rivals the first round of voting on April 23, though he was still terms winning the May 7 stoond round comfortably.

Paris rally protests Algeria killing

PARIS (AFP) — Several hundred demonstrators protested in Paris Saturday against anti-feminist violence in Algeria after the killing of a prominent women's leader Suspected Islamic fundamentalists. The 300 demonstrators, mainly Algehans who have fled their country after the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, were protesting against the killing of Nabila Djahnine last Wednesday. The protestors, divided among those who and those who oppose talks with funmentalists to end the conflict, also called for the repeal family law introduced by the then one-party regime in 1984. Unknown gunmen shot Ms. Djahnine, 35, dead in the city of Tizi Ouzou, 110 kilometres east of Algiers (see page 12).

Yeltsin speech attacked from all Russian sides

MOSCOW (Agencies) - Mr. Yeltsin, referring to President Boris Yeltsin's state of the nation speech was attacked from all sides of the political spectrum on Friday for proposing no new solutions to Russia's old prob-

Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov dismis-sed the speech, delivered on Thursday, as "useless, shameful" and devoid of any attempt at listing priorities for action.

On the other extreme in the Duma (lower house of parliament), former liberal Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov said Friday that Mr. Yeltsin had ducked the essential question: "Who is responsible for the power crisis (in the Kremlin)?"

Similarly, the newspaper Nezavisimaya Gazeta said the speech was the result of rivalry in Mr. Yeltsin's entourage between hardliners and democrats -- "those who say everything is alright and the others who complain that nothing works."

The newspaper added: "Yeltsin's speech was written by democrats. It will not be applied by the bureaucrats." A debate on Mr. Yeltsin's

address in the Duma failed to materialise on Friday because parliamentary leaders were attending a conference on relations between the Kremlin and regional authorities. A few parliamentarians

cautiously identified one or two positive elements in Mr. Yeltsin's speech, although they said it was not clear how the president could implement his proposals. Yegor Gaidar, former reformist prime minister and

leader of the liberal Russia's Choice party — the largest group in the Duma - said that Mr. Yeltsin's speech was "rather positive." But he indicated that furth-

er reaction was premature until concrete policies emerged from the president's pledge to pursue economic reform, currency stabilisation, privatisation and the

fight against inflation. Our support or lack of support won't be based on declarations, it will be based on practical policies," Mr.

Gaidar said. However, he criticised the president for refusing to denounce Russia's use of armed force to crush secessionists in Chechenya.

the military's botched handling of the separatist rebellion in Chechenya, stressed the need for a more efficient and slimmed-down army. But he gave no details how this would be done, or where the money would come from.

Ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky rejected the idea. He told journalists: "A small professional army won't save Russia." Instead, he urged a military regime. "The army is the only real force in the country," he said.

Until now, Mr. Zhirinovsky's ultra-nationalists, the second-largest group in the Duma, has been one of Mr. Yeltsin's few allies on the Chechenya conflict.

The German government said Mr. Yeltsin's speech showed the Russian president remained committed to reform and cooperation with "President Yeltsin's speech

showed, in the view of the German government, that the Russian president remains committed to political and economic reform and cooperation with the West," deputy government spokesman Herbert Schmuelling

'As such, the government welcomes above all the emphatic avowal to develop the rule of law, especially in securing human rights and reforming the justice sys-

Russian Presidential aide Georgy Satarov said Friday Mr. Yeltsin will issue fewer personal decrees so that parliament can begin playing a bigger role in decisionmaking.

Quoted by the news agency Interfax, he told reporters that decrees issued by Mr. Yeltsin would also be subject to more stringent legal requirements.

Since 1992, when he had difficulty getting legislation passed by a rebellious Supreme Soviet, Mr. Yeltsin has made extensive use of his constitutional powers to rule by **decree**.

The Supreme Soviet, predecessor to the Duma, was dissolved in 1993. According to a new constitution adopted in December of that year, a presidential decree is equivalent to legislation passed by

Cholera rife in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AFP) U.N relief workers battled cases of cholera in Mogadishu Friday as troops of the U.S.-led Operation United Shield checked security at the city's port and airport after the firing of an anti-aircraft

weapon. Many of Mogadishu's residents rely for water on contaminated wells, with the water moving around the city in drums on carts drawn by donkeys.

The U.N. World Health Organisation (WHO) reported 533 confirmed cases of cholera in south Mogadishu the past two weeks, with 11

It said the number of cases was levelling off, however, and that no cholera had been reported in north Mogadishu. which is controlled by selfstyled President Ali Mahdi Mohammad. The agency also reported

acute diarrhoea in several other regions of Somalia, but concluded that cholera was under control. The U.N. Children's Fund

(UNICEF) is chlorinating wells around south Mogadishu, and both agencies are conducting a public aware-

ness campaign. They are among the few agencies still active in Mogadishu.

Most expatriate relief agency staff have pulled back to Nairobi, the capital of neighbouring Kenya, while they wait to see whether Somalia collapses into chaos after the last U.N. troops leave during the first week of

Their retreat will be protected by 2.600 U.S. marines and 500 Italian troops on the ground, gunships in the zir. and 7,000 troops from Britain. France, Italy, Malaysia, Pakistan and the United States aboard 18 warships.

Task force spokesman Jerry Broeckert, a U.S. Marine lieutenant colonel, said Friday that United Shield troops were reconnoitering the landing beaches and the priemeter of the area enclosing the port and airport, which will be sealed off when the marines land.

The reconnaissance follows the firing of a 37-mm antiaircraft rocket two days ago which seemed to have just been a test.

Mestiri arrives in Kabul amid uncertain power shifts

prominent

KABUL United Nations official arrived in Kabul on Friday armed with a peace plan designed to end the victous civil war and establish a multiparty governing council.

In an auspicious sign, Mahmoud Mestiri flew into Kabul airport, which was reopened Friday after having been closed for more than a year due to the heavy fighting that has devastated the capit-

The airport terminal building has been pounded by rockets and several damaged and destroyed jets sit on the tarmac. But the United Nations, as well as the beleaguered Afghans, hope that three years of civil war will

give way to peace.
"No doubt about it, this is the closest we have been to an agreement," Mr. Mestiri

told journalists. Mr. Mestiri's plan calls for embattled President Burnanuddın Rabbani to step aside and for the warring factions to join hands on a multi-party

council. The council would

Another week of violence in

Algeria has been marked by a

spectacular series of murders

of intellectuals, artists and

political activists, the latest

Friday of a journalist in the

An official statement

announced the murder of the

journalist. Djamel Ziater.

who worked for the regional

daily Al Djoumhoria (The

Republic, saying he was

assassinated early Friday out

giving no details of the cir-

His murder brings to 29 the

number of journalists slain in

attacks blamed by the author-

ities on Islamic extremists

waging a bloody war against

the secular army-backed gov-

ernment for the last three

years. The violence is esti-

mated to have claimed 30,000

At the end of January,

Islamic fundamentalists

ordered their fighters to in-

tensify military campaigns,

and despite increased secur-

ity, were able to hit right into

the heart of the capital,

Some of the murders this

Algiers.

cumstances of the killing.

western town of Gdiel.

Afghans not linked to any of the militias. Mr. Mestiri said he hoped the council could meet by

Monday and assume control

incinge

of the country at that point or soon after. Even if the council comes to power as planned, no one is predicting a smooth transi-

There is still sporadic fighting in Kabul. At least two people were killed Thursday night in rocket duels between government troops and Hezb-e-Wahadat, a Shiite Muslim militia.

Also, the Talibans, a recently formed militia made up of religious students, has advanced to the southern outskirts of Kabul and many believe the group will try to take over the city.

The group has not agreed to take part in the council. Mr. Mestiri conceded that the situation in Kabul was still uncertain.

"Events are not very clear, we don't know what's going

week aimed at "symbolic"

targets, killing the national

theatre director, Azeddine

Medjoubi, the famous musi-

cian Rachid and the president

of a feminist organisation,

However, these attacks

were only the tip of the

iceberg. Outside the capital,

kidnappings, murders -

often accompanied by mutila-

tions - and intimidations

continue unabated, according

cade ourselves in our

homes," a villager from the

Kabylie region said. Isolated

hamlets are most at risk.

"There is no one to protect

On Thursday, an opposi-

us," an old man explained.

tion coalition, the Movement

for the Republic (MPR), cal-

ied on Algerians to defend

themselves, saying the secur-

ity forces were not up to the

job. This call to organise

"self-defence" units against

attacks by armed Islamic fun-

damentalists was the first

such move by a political

tinued attacks on fun-

The army meanwhile con-

group here.

"At night we have to barri-

to reliable witnesses.

Nabila Diahnine,

Islamic government, this is not in the Koran," said Mr. Jan, who like many of the Taliban fighters wears a black

Algerian intellectuals targetted line with its strategy to

'eradicate" armed militants.

that over 13 days, 105 armed

An official statement said

fundamentalists had been killed both in Algiers and other parts of the country. There are no figures on the number of security forces killed. And for the first time. according to diplomatic sources in Tunis, an attack was reportedly launched in a

neighbouring country when

six Tunisian policemen were

killed in the southern tourist region of Sendes. It was unknown whether this was an isolated action by a group wanting to obtain arms, or whether it formed part of a new strategy by Islamic fundamentalists to spread the violence to neighbouring countries because of their support for the Algerian authorities.

According to official figures, Islamic fundamentalists last year carried out 2,725 acts of violence targeting mainly infrastructures, transport and telecommunica-

(Continued on page 7)

fend him. Taiwan to bar ex-convicts

83-year-old